

A
BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE
OF
MATTHEW LANKTREE,
WESLEYAN MINISTER:
EMBRACING A
PERIOD OF UPWARDS OF FORTY YEARS;
COMPRISING NUMEROUS
CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES OF COTEMPORARIES,
AND
HISTORICAL NOTICES
OF THE RISE, PROGRESS, AND INFLUENCE OF METHODISM IN
VARIOUS PARTS OF IRELAND.
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

" My soul shall make her boast in the LORD; the HUMBLE shall hear thereof
and be glad."—PSALM XXXIV. 2.

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PREFACE.

THE Author of the following unadorned detail of ministerial recollections, is not unconscious of the difficulties of the undertaking. He is aware that many estimable characters, who were well qualified for the task, have shrunk from the attempt; and rather than become their own biographers, have consigned to the silence of the tomb, not only what would have been their most authentic attestation to the truth and power of the Gospel, but names and events connected with their personal history, worthy of being transmitted to the latest posterity. He is convinced that such an excess of delicacy has no countenance from the inspired writers, who uniformly encourage the people of God to record his goodness, and proclaim his praise "from one generation to another."

In accordance with these views, when the writer was compelled, by increasing infirmities, to retire from his more public and responsible duties, he endeavoured to redeem his time in private, by reviewing those manifestations of mercy which came under his own observation, or were transmitted to him by respectable witnesses. While thus engaged, he was induced to hope that, through the medium of the press, several descriptions of persons who were deeply impressed on his heart, as well as his own children, might, through the divine blessing, derive advantage from his labours. To many of these, he is persuaded, that several facts here stated will recall past

seasons and enjoyments of the happiest description, connected with the name and spirit of the Lord Jesus, the exercise of faith, the ardour of love, and the glorious hope of immortality.

When the Author entered on the regular course of his labours in the ministry, the second race of Methodist preachers were rapidly finishing their course. Of the devoted body of young men by whom they were succeeded, and with whom he had the honour to associate, how few are now survivors ! He has attempted, with affection and fidelity, to sketch some of their characters and delineate their virtues ; but in this attempt he felt his great inadequacy ; for much of what he admired in them was too personal and affecting to be inserted. In his numerous references to cotemporaries, or past events, he has studied “ to speak the truth in love,” and availed himself of occurring opportunities, to acknowledge the piety and usefulness of ministers and people of various denominations, as well as of his own community, which he trusts will not be found unedifying to those “ who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,” and hold “ the unity of the Spirit” with his members, “ in the bond of peace.” On several occasions he has used their names and correspondence with respectful freedom.

For nearly half a century he has been most intimately identified with Wesleyan Methodism—“ through honour and dishonour,” weal and wo ; and has given ample and correct information respecting its operations through various parts of Ireland. He has witnessed many revivals of religion, and referred to the instruments and means which it pleased the God of all grace to sanction in the extension of his work, on regular circuits, and Mission stations. The early movements, successes, and persecutions of the indefatigable Irish Missionaries, he has been careful to rescue from oblivion ; and hopes, for the sake

of our common Christianity—for the sake of truth—that in future, when certain men are describing the degenerate state of our country, and making speeches, or writing reports, respecting their efforts to ameliorate her moral condition, they will not forget the labours of their brethren of the Wesleyan denomination to effect the same purpose, nor designedly cast them into the shade ;—for they were first in their day to engage in the Christian enterprise ; nor will they be found least, or last, amidst the evangelical agencies of the present more enlightened period. But “ He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

Many of the proceedings of the Irish Conference are interwoven with these pages ; those respecting the great sacramental question, in which the Author was most vitally concerned, are given more at large. To this subject he calls the attention of every candid inquirer.

The last few years of his life, have been singularly diversified with light and shade, to which he has only so far adverted, as to form a connecting link in the series of providential occurrences which have hitherto distinguished his probationary state, or prove useful to others, if called to encounter similar difficulties. “ Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” UNTO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH, BY CHRIST JESUS, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END ! AMEN.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE.

CHAPTER I.

1770.

MY native place is Oldcastle, County of Meath. My father was the youngest son of Thomas Lanktree* and Martha Lindsay, whose offspring were George, Thomas, Mary, Ann, and James. The name of my maternal grandfather was Cottenham, and my grandmother's maiden name Bennet. They had a son, Robert, who when young emigrated to America; and two daughters, Sarah and Jane—the former was wife to my uncle, George Lanktree, and the latter to my father, James, his youngest brother.

My grandfather Cottenham dying young, his widow was subsequently married to Merrick King, a professed member of the Society of Friends, to which she also became conscientiously united.

My father died in his twenty-fifth year, when I was yet an infant, being the youngest of three children. I was dedicated to the blessed God, by baptism, on Lord's day,

* Few surnames are spelled more arbitrarily than mine. In the North it is written Langtry : in the East some drop both the *k* and *g*. The English, from whom it is derived, write it Langtree—a spelling which some of my sons have adopted, agreeing better, *as they think*, with its sense and origin.

the 14th of October, 1770; and, in consequence of arrangements made at my father's decease, was placed under the care of my grandmother King; a circumstance which I gratefully acknowledge as a first link in the visible chain of providential occurrences by which I have been led on and sustained through every period of my life.

This excellent woman exemplified the power of religion in a spiritual and heavenly mind, attachment to public worship, and devotedness to private prayer; in meekness, patience, and universal benevolence.

My heavenly Father inspired her heart with singular tenderness towards me; and, notwithstanding that I frequently grieved her by a volatile, thoughtless disposition, I loved her above all the world. When I was committed to her management, the children of her late husband were all provided for, and she appeared to receive me as a special charge from the Lord. I cannot recollect a single act of severity in her mode of treatment. When my conduct demanded correction, she would call me to her; and solemnly, but mildly, reason with me, and engage me by promise never to do so again *until the next time*. As I grew up, and began to reflect on the obligation of duty, nothing could more deeply affect my mind than the consciousness of having wounded her feelings. Her dignified reserve would melt me into repentant tears, and make me wretched until I obtained explicit assurances of her forgiveness.

From her I first learned to pray, in expectation that the Lord would graciously answer; though my views were confused and imperfect. When I was very young, she became sick, almost to death; the thoughts of her removal for ever from me overwhelmed my mind. I was frequently about her bed and saw her affliction. In my distress, I retired and implored Almighty God to relieve

and restore her to her former health, which to my great comfort was speedily the case. Shortly after, when I was myself very ill of a lingering worm fever, I endeavoured to try the same expedient, and very soon recovered.

At a tender age, my life was nearly sacrificed by the intemperance of my step-grandfather. Drunkenness was his besetment. So long as he abstained from strong drink he was industrious and inoffensive; but when he once commenced, he generally proceeded to the most ruinous extent. On this occasion, he took advantage of the absence of his faithful monitor, and, to treat a visitor, whiskey was introduced. They drank to shameful excess, and the stranger forced on me so much of the fiery poison, that on my grandmother's return she found me apparently lifeless. It pleased God to bless her exertions for my recovery, and animation was restored.

About this time, my mother married a second time, and I was removed to live with her and my step-father; but the change was most distressing. I felt as if translated from my proper element, and resolved to leave them the first opportunity. That I might go where they would not easily find me out, I eloped early on a winter's morning, determined, if possible, to go to Dublin, where I had a kind-hearted uncle, John King. After proceeding about eight miles, I began to feel faint and weary. My appearance attracted the attention of a young woman, who kindly inquired where I was going? what provision I had for my journey? &c. My artless replies discovered my real situation. She then warned me of my danger if I proceeded, and charged me to return home as fast as possible. I endeavoured to comply with her advice, but having to cross a mountain, I was soon benighted, and nearly lost with cold and hunger, until the distant glimmering light from a small cabin directed me to an asylum

for the night. This simple adventure was the occasion of exquisite grief to my dear friends. Conceiving I had been lost in a large bog, a party of them spent the night searching for my body with torches and drags. In the morning, however, having received some intelligence of the road I had taken, they found me in my little retreat, and carried me home on their shoulders rejoicing. How gracious are the designs of Providence! Both these events were mercifully overruled for my good; the former gave me an early disgust at ardent spirits, and the latter restored me to the guide of my youth for a longer season.

My friends were desirous to afford me a good education, but the schools I attended were not favoured with religious advantages. In them I received no good impressions. In general the tutor was immoral, and the scholars did what was right in their own eyes. When the master was a Romanist, which sometimes occurred, the majority of the pupils being of his party, would revile and persecute the Protestant children; and when returning from school, pursue us home, throwing stones, shouting, "Luther's breed, and Calvin's seed!"

The Scriptures were early put into my hands, and the holy law of God made deep impressions on my heart. Fox's Martyrology was one of my first books. I sympathised with the suffering Protestants, and considered their persecutors must have been the enemies of Christ and his people. My conviction, therefore, and my judgment were unfeignedly Protestant; but I knew not that faith which strengthened those sufferers for Christ to overcome the world: I felt not that love which in them was more ardent than the flames of martyrdom. One consequence of this spiritual destitution was, that neither curiosity, nor any kind of entreaty, could induce me to attend the celebration of a Popish mass. I thought that if I went to such worship, I must necessarily bear my tes-

timony, and cry out against it, like the martyrs, or God would punish my disobedience; and if I did, then the Romanists would put me to death, for which I was not prepared, and, consequently, though I should die a martyr for religion, I must be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. For the same reason I would not learn the Irish language, which I have since very much regretted. But I had then too much reason for associating in my ideas the spirit of Popery and persecution with the vernacular tongue.

The state of public morals was, in those days, most deplorable and corrupting. Blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness, with their attendant works of darkness, were awfully predominant. Party spirit also, with its pitched battles and sanguinary conflicts in fairs and markets—its nocturnal devastations and private murders, leaves a deep stain on the recollections of that period. Sometimes one clan or party, of Romanists, strove for the mastery over another; the fair-day was the time of decision, when they fought like furies, with cudgels and stones, until the victory was obtained, and abundance of bloodshed and battery marked the conquest. Which ever party gained the day, the Protestant inhabitants were frequently sufferers, by having their doors and windows dashed in by a shower of stones.

When the Protestants were publicly attacked, it was generally with fearful odds, and often with loss of life on both sides, when recourse was had to fire-arms by the weaker party.

The amusements of the neighbourhood gave additional proof of the corruption and depravity of the people. It was a common practice in winter for young and old to meet by agreement in some neighbour's house, where they could have a large fire; here they remained to a late hour, singing songs, relating fairy tales, or old legends, playing

cards, dancing, &c. In summer, the Sabbaths were awfully desecrated, particularly in the celebration of what they called paterns, or patron days. These were celebrated by numerous assemblies, with drinking, dancing, and every evil work.

The manner in which they conducted their wakes was horrible. When the death of a neighbour was announced, on the approach of night, crowds of people, principally the young of both sexes, assembled to the house of *mourning*!—not to comfort the bereaved survivors, or profit by the solemn appearance of death; but to banish reflection, and every serious thought, by drinking whiskey, smoking tobacco, singing songs, &c.—by acting the most ludicrous, obscene, and profane characters, frequently interrupted, indeed, by the wailing of a newly arrived female relative or friend, or by the entrance of a man who had learned to repeat, for the repose of the soul departed, the “*de profundis*,” or hundred and thirtieth Psalm in Latin.

Gladly do I turn from these faint sketches of evil times, to describe the state of my mind at that period.

From my fourteenth to my twentieth year, was the most unhappy, because the most unholy portion of my existence. The snares with which I was beset, the susceptibility of my nature to evil, and the active part which I often took in the foolish and sinful courses pursued by other young persons, humble my soul at this moment before the Lord, whilst I adore that mysterious agency by which I was withheld from many evils to which my deceitful heart was most inclined, and even “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Sometimes my thoughts were turned anxiously to the subject of heart religion. I felt the need of it, but knew not how to attain. The solemn, perhaps sudden, approach of death, and the certainty of judgment, have often arrested my mind. To cherish these reflections I resorted to

many expedients, but they were of no value. My spirit was wounded, and my sore ran in the night season.

The spirituality of the worship due to the living God, often filled me with deep concern. My attempts at private prayer were unworthy of what he approved, and the alienation of my affections and feelings from the public prayers of the church perplexed and confounded me. My worship seemed to be but a mockery of my Maker, yet I dare not desist, for I believed that without prayer I must inevitably perish:—I even ventured to approach the Lord's table.

I believed that God must have a people upon earth as formerly, but who they were, or where to find them, were questions I could not solve. I had also exalted views of the ministerial character. Having in my childhood, heard a clergyman preach from these words, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." I was astonished that he could treat such a subject with such indifference, and on my road home, reflecting on his apathy, my spirit was roused; I stopped, and said in my heart, "Well, were Almighty God to make me a minister, I would preach in a different manner; I would surely warn the wicked, and strive to make them sensible of their danger."

Similar thoughts attended me as I advanced to manhood. They grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. Sometimes they penetrated my heart as with a two-edged sword, and at other seasons an undefinable sensation of pleasure, attended by hope, would gently pass over my mind; then again, and not unfrequently, would I feel within me a most extraordinary counterworking energy of Satan, pouring in a flood of hellish thoughts and blasphemous suggestions. Many times have I retired, and in secret places implored with tears that the Lord would in mercy show me "what I

should do to be saved." I was weary and heavy-laden, groaning under an afflicted conscience and an unholy nature. Even then, I felt that the pardon of all my sins could not reach my case, unless that my heart were changed, and the influence of carnal nature reversed, which constantly subjected me "to sin and death."

On some occasions I felt constrained to speak on these subjects to my youthful companions, in such a manner as tended, I believe, to prepare them for the gracious dispensation which was shortly to be revealed.

CHAPTER II.

1789.

By what apparently contingent and small events does the God of all grace commence and accomplish his saving purposes!

In the year 1789, my uncle, John King, being about to visit some relatives of our family in the County of Cavan, I bore him company. The Smiths' and Fergusons', of Drumliff, near Ballyhease, received us not only with the kindness of near relatives, but with that of Christians. They had lately joined the Methodists, and some of them were happy in God their Saviour. We made but a short stay among them, but it was sufficient to impress my mind with a persuasion that they enjoyed what I wanted. On my return home, I determined not to rest until I possessed the same salvation. Accordingly I set my affairs in order, entreated the Lord to direct my steps, and hastened to revisit my Christian friends.

Previously to my departure, I had the following dream:—I imagined myself standing in a certain strange place of worship, like the publican in the temple, imploring mercy, and that I thus continued until the whole congregation retired, leaving me alone;—that Satan then appeared in a horrible form to oppose me;—that he seized me by the neck and strove to strangle me on the spot: while I was writhing and panting under his infernal grasp, that I felt as if my heart, though ready to fail and faint, began to call on the name of Jesus;—immediate strength was inspired, and increased to such a degree, that I was enabled to turn upon my adversary the devil, and trample him beneath my feet. With this conflict I awoke, and the visionary triumph yielded me some encouragement.

I returned to my friends in Drumliff, the 23d January, 1790. They received me with cordiality, and afforded me all the spiritual assistance in their power. They first invited me to hear a sermon in Ballyhease. Mr. James Irwin was the preacher—a young man about my own age. Their little preaching house was well filled at ten o'clock, on Sabbath morning, and the whole assembly appeared influenced by the spirit of devotion. They sang with melody, prayed with fervency, and heard the Word with affectionate attention. All was simplicity and love. My heart cleaved to them, being constrained to say, “God is in this people of a truth!”

In the evening they conducted me to their meeting for prayer, which was as new to me as their morning service. Their serious and judicious leader, William Phair, held the meeting. His exhortation powerfully affected my heart, and his prayers and tears were surprisingly interesting. On the following Lord's day they introduced me to the Society, where I humbly commenced meeting with those simple earnest souls, as a candidate for eternal life.

The struggles of my panting heart were frequently animated by hope. Day and night I endeavoured to call upon God. The hopes and fears, the joys and sadness of those days, are still fresh in my memory. One circumstance I shall particularly mention. It occurred in private, while I was endeavouring with fervency to pour out my soul before the Lord. A sudden ray of divine light and consolation beamed upon my mind, accompanied with a distinct intimation, as if a voice had spoken to my inmost soul, "You will have to preach the Gospel." It filled me with awful astonishment; but like young Samuel, I did not then understand it to be the call of God.

About the same time, I went on a visit to another relative, Edward Cottenham, who was afflicted with cancer. He was a suffering saint, and waiting for his dissolution. While I opened to him the state of my mind, he endeavoured to pour the balm of consolation into my wounded spirit, solemnly concluding with these words, "Young man, you will certainly have to preach the Gospel of Christ." The coincidence of this saying, with what I have just related, sank deeply into my heart. I was overwhelmed before God. In the night season, the terror of the Lord was set before me:—the damning nature of sin—the depravity of my nature—the hour of death—the day of judgment—an endless eternity—the necessity of grace, and my utter helplessness;—all came before me in a manner not to be expressed, and urged me to cry incessantly to him who is able to save. I made supplication, with many tears, that God would be merciful to me, and prepare me for all the purposes and requirements of his adorable will.

March seventh was the Sabbath; to me it was as "the beginning of days." At our morning service, Mr. Joseph Armstrong preached, with great freedom and unction, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." The subject

was adapted to my state, and directed to my heart, which was softened into tenderness by the manifestation of his dying love. At the church service, the same truths were presented to my mind; at the Lord's table especially, the "redemption which is in Jesus," appeared to be brought into immediate contact with my chastened feelings, as if it were all my own, and produced an immediate and heavenly tranquillity in my mind. When returning to Drumliff, the gloom which formerly seemed to veil the creation was removed, and the presence of God appeared every where to my mental eye, filling the temple of the universe, and shedding a glory over "these his lower works," of which I had never before formed a conception. The language of the Psalmist was become graciously mine, "Whom have I in heaven but thee; there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." At the evening prayer-meeting, my soul overflowed with love to my adorable Redeemer, in whom I could now rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. My cousin, R. Ferguson, who had watched over me with the tenderest solicitude, observed in my altered countenance, when we next met, an index of the joy and consolation which filled my heart. To him I could use the language of David, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

Having thus obtained mercy, it became my earnest prayer that my "kinsfolk and neighbours" might be made acquainted with the same salvation. I wrote to them immediately, and hastened home to explain "the great things the Lord had done for me." The desire of my heart was granted in the following manner. Mr. William Wilson, one of the travelling preachers, felt his mind strangely drawn towards my native place, and accordingly came there, and was entertained by my friends at the

same time that my letter reached them ; his preaching made a deep impression on their minds. When I returned, they were full of concern, and appeared as a people prepared for the Lord. The following day, Mr. Wilson returned. His appearance and manner evinced the "man of God." His apparel was very plain ; he was sweetly serious, apt to teach, and devoted to prayer. He preached on Saturday evening and Sabbath morning, after which he proposed forming a Society. Above twenty persons gave in their names on the occasion, the majority of them my near and dear relations. The most serious part of this interesting transaction was, the injunction which Mr. Wilson laid on me, that I should take the charge of watching over them in the Lord. I knew not what to do. I dare not refuse, lest I should grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whose agency was so apparent in this strange work ; but when the preacher departed, and left me to reflect on all that occurred to myself and my people, within the space of three weeks, I was filled with astonishment, and humbled in the dust ; but the love of Christ constrained me, and the readiness of mind discovered by my friends to embrace the Gospel, greatly contributed to my encouragement. And whilst I pleaded with the Lord that he would take us to be his people, and be himself our leader and guide, my heart expanded with ardent desires for their salvation, and my eyes overflowed with tears of gratitude for what I had already witnessed. A necessity being thus laid upon me, I determined to go forward, trusting in the name of the Lord. According to the strength he afforded, I met the Society, held prayer-meetings, and visited from house to house, "testifying repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." The work was his, and he did not "despise the day of small things."

My mother was among the first witnesses for a gracious

pardoning God in our Society. Coming to the meeting, her soul was drawn out in earnest prayer; as she proceeded, she continued pleading for the revelation of mercy to her heart. Her prayer was accepted, and she came to the class-meeting rejoicing in God her Saviour.

At this time my aunt Millar took her death sickness. I attended her day and night. On one occasion, whilst praying by her, my cousin, William Lanktree, obtained a blessed evidence of pardon. Shortly after, my aunt was filled with heavenly consolation, and continued in the same happy state until her spirit took its flight to glory.

During the summer we had a considerable number of conversions. William Henry, Esq., and his amiable wife, renounced the fashionable world, and cast in their lot among us. They invited the preachers to their house, and became active and faithful in promoting the common salvation. The parish church was now too small to accommodate the crowds which thronged there, through the influence of Methodism. We were soon obliged to divide the Society into two or three classes, and the preaching and prayer-meetings were greatly owned of God.

The 5th of September was a day of God's power. The Spirit was poured from on high on all our assemblies, particularly at the evening prayer-meeting. Some looked to him they had pierced by their sins, and wept bitterly; others cried for mercy with extraordinary earnestness, and many believed to the saving of their souls. Deep concern rested on several persons who were formerly stupid and insensible, and spread rapidly among their friends and connexions. One of the trophies of this day of salvation, was my aunt Sarah Lanktree, my mother's sister. She was richly made partaker of the earnest of her heavenly inheritance, which she joyfully and consistently witnessed in life and death; and now

fully enjoys with many others, who on that occasion had "their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

Our new preachers, Messrs. William Hamilton and Thomas Ridgeway, were zealous in carrying on the good work, which increased regularly during the following winter.

On Christmas morning, I first attempted to speak from a portion of Scripture, and was favoured with freedom; though I often regretted that it prematurely procured for me the title of *local preacher*, with much extra labour, and frequent calls to preach among old Methodists and strangers; a task for which I was very inadequate, and in the performance of which I was often distressed and burdened. The case was quite different when I was ministering to and "among my own people."

My general plan was to hold four meetings in the course of the week for exhortation and prayer, besides Sabbath duties. These were, to meet the men in the morning, and sometimes another small class; then the children; at four in the afternoon the female class; and when we had no preacher, which happened every second Sabbath, to preach or exhort at seven in the evening. In attending to these important duties, I strove to fulfil with diligence my temporal calling. I rose early to improve my mind by reading and meditation, and although I was greatly tempted, the Lord stood by me, and I felt, almost without interruption, the light of his countenance, and his blessing attended my labours.

Before I shall enter on the future details of the good hand of my God towards me, it may prove satisfactory to some of my readers to state more particularly why I so unreservedly connected myself with the Methodists.

1. The agreement of their doctrines with the Holy Scriptures, as far as I understood them, and also to my spiritual wants. They were constantly inculcating the

natural depravity of man ; his sinful, guilty, and lost condition ; his subjection to Satan, and exposure to everlasting ruin. All this I felt to be true, by painful experience. *Salvation by grace* was wrought into the texture of all their sermons, exhortations, and prayers—a free, full, present salvation, through the atonement, intercession, and Spirit of Jesus, for all who repent and believe the Gospel, was their constant and delightful theme. I felt this to be God's truth. To my soul it was life from the dead. Its fruit was holiness and happiness, love to God and man, with a blessed hope of immortality.

2. Their *ministry* was extempore, plain, practical, and spiritual. It was guarded by conscientious attention to Scriptural qualifications, and fruitful in the conversion of souls. The missionary character, and itinerant labours of the preachers with whom I had become acquainted, convinced me that, like their great Master and his apostles, they were seeking lost sinners in order to their salvation. The seal of their ministry was before my eyes, and brought strong evidence to my heart that they were sent by God.

3. Their economy and discipline, as far as I was acquainted with them, were calculated to edify, comfort, and perfect the souls which were gathered into the fold of Christ by their ministry.

Their weekly class-meetings were adapted to the purposes of familiar, personal instruction and reproof ; their quarterly love-feasts afforded facilities to the remote as well as the central members of Society, on a larger scale, to provoke to love and good works. Their band-meetings gave the fullest scope to the exercise of Christian fidelity, and of cherishing the hallowed flame of select cordial friendship. Their watch-nights, field-meetings, prayer-meetings, &c., were authorized and acknowledged of Christ, for spreading the leaven of religion throughout the whole community. The manner too, in which they re-

ceived and supported the Gospel, appeared to me to accord with the endearing words of our Lord, "He that receiveth you receiveth me." All was *free gift*. The same spirit influencing preachers and people. Consequently none could lose by the most liberal support of his cause.

I would not be understood to say that all these considerations were at first presented to my mind, as inducements to *commence* meeting in a Methodist Society; but, having a strong desire "to flee from the wrath to come," which was the first qualification they required, I was most seasonably and providentially directed into fellowship with them in the Gospel of God our Saviour. The more I became acquainted with their doctrines and practices, as a people, I felt that I had additional cause to glorify God for the privileges I enjoyed. Among them I first heard the word of reconciliation;—among them my prayer was directed to the throne of heavenly grace, and accepted through the mediation of our great High Priest;—among them my soul was blessed and established;—among them I had an open door to exercise the ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus; and, in cordial co-operation with them, he was pleased to bless my ministry in the manner I have already mentioned.

For these, and similar considerations, I felt it to be my duty and interest, as well as the cordial desire of my heart, to be intimately connected with Methodism; to embrace the spiritual advantages it afforded, share its reproach, and promote its interests.

CHAPTER III.

1792.

FROM this period, it appeared to be the design of unerring wisdom to train my soul, by a series of conflicts in the Christian warfare, to an experimental feeling of my utter insufficiency to encounter either the subtle or violent assaults of the evil one—to think, or pray, or preach—to do or suffer, in a Gospel spirit, without the continual and renewed supplies of grace and strength which the Gospel promises, and our Lord dispenses to his dependant suppliants, according to his own good pleasure. Not only were flesh and blood resisting my progress ; but principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, combined to harass and distress my mind. My temptations were numerous, and sometimes horrible. In my attempt to subdue one enemy, my own carnal mind, I frequently fasted to an extreme, and abstained from necessary food to such a degree, as was incompatible with health or the important duties of life. My digestive powers were enfeebled, my physical powers relaxed, and my mental energies impaired. Satan did not fail to turn my inexperience to his own advantage.

I longed and laboured to proclaim the Gospel to all around ; but it became a matter of great difficulty to be satisfied of the proper boundary of duty. I saw the world sunk in sin and misery. Providence, I considered, had set before me an open door, and the Lord had called me to the work of an evangelist ; hence I concluded that I should immediately give up all my secular concerns, and call sinners to repentance.

During these searching exercises of mind, I became

acquainted with Mr. Creighton, of Kilmore, near Cavan, brother to the Rev. James Creighton, of London, a church clergyman, who had joined Mr. Wesley's connexion. He appeared much interested for my good, and encouraged me to open my mind to him freely, and I believe he was most sincerely desirous to advise me for the best; but his manner was strong and most injudicious. In regard to my fasting, &c., he said I was under a delusion of the devil. When I quoted the example of Mr. Wilson, whom I venerated, he replied, that "he was an ignorant enthusiast," with other remarks which proved exceedingly injurious to my tender mind, and greatly exposed me to temptation and unprofitable reasonings.

At the same time, I was assailed with frequent suggestions, of a hellish character, against the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, the Deity of our Lord, the virtue of his atoning blood, and other vital doctrines of Christianity. Amidst these distressing vicissitudes of mind, a person put into my hands a large infidel book, which dreadfully increased my embarrassment of mind. It struck at once at the foundation of all my hope, and gave sufficient evidence of the infernal source from whence it proceeded, by its agreement with the delusive suggestions which had already given me so much annoyance. My only refuge was prayer, and endeavouring to stay my soul upon God; my deliverance was effected gradually, by increasing light to discern the Scripture testimony on these all-important subjects, but especially by the peace and consolation I received while calling on the name of the Lord Jesus.

On some occasions of retirement and humiliation, I was favoured with precious intimations and earnestness of future good. One of these was the evening of the day on which I first heard of the death of the Rev. John Wesley. Though I had never seen him, I was affected by the account in an extraordinary manner. A spirit of weeping

concern and earnest supplication was poured into my heart. Perhaps I had never enjoyed such enlargement in prayer, or enjoyed such lofty views of the privileges and prospects of Methodism; provided that we, as preachers and people, followed him, as he followed Christ Jesus.

At another time, when my cousin Thomas and I were met in private for mutual edification, we were drawn out in earnest pleadings that the Lord our God would make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and that we might finally obtain mercy to spend a blessed eternity together. The answer to our hearts was immediate, as it regarded the conscious earnest of heaven, and we rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. The remembrance of these precious moments is delightful!

The happy death of my cousin William, whose conversion to God I have already mentioned, to whom I was attached by "love stronger than death," was greatly blessed to the confirming of my faith. He ripened for glory under accumulated bodily sufferings, and fell asleep in Jesus, while I was meeting the Society in his father's house. His Lord had prepared a place for him, and through the grace of God, he stood ready prepared for glory; he hailed the approach of his Redeemer, and in bidding farewell to earth, his last words were, "Come, Lord Jesus!"*

About this time, our Society had an admonitory address from a female preacher of the Society of Friends, which I shall here mention. There was then a small Quaker Meeting-house in Oldcastle, to which we were affectionately and specially invited on the occasion. This excellent woman addressed the assembly with much pathos,

* See a printed account of this gracious youth, *Arminian Magazine*, 1792, p. 181.

referring to the promised Shiloh ; and observed, that as she rode through the town it was strongly impressed on her mind that there was an ingathering of souls to our Lord in this place, though not pertaining to their Society ; and concluded by a solemn warning, “as they had begun in the Spirit, not to end in the flesh.” She prayed for us with great fervency and many tears.

Having occasion to visit Dublin, my uncle John King introduced me to Mrs. Shepherd, who, he said, would like to hear me speak about religion, though she was not a Methodist. Her husband had lately died in a most awful manner, which roused her to a deep concern for her eternal interests. She was convinced of sin, but knew not the Gospel remedy for her wounded spirit. I found great liberty in speaking to herself and children of the redemption which is in Jesus, and he was pleased to apply the word of his grace with power to her heart. In a short time she joined the Society, and ultimately became the leader of two female classes, and a mother in Israel.

After Conference, 1792, I was informed that I had been proposed and accepted as an eligible candidate for the ministry. This was done without my knowledge ; but most providentially for me, that proposal was overruled and postponed for a season.

I preached and travelled considerably ; yet my mind was frequently in a suffering and sorrowful state. From these painful and discouraging views, I began to conclude that I should renounce all thoughts of the itinerant ministry, form a settlement in the world, and be contented to labour in the Lord’s vineyard as a local preacher. Concurring circumstances strengthened these views. I became acquainted with Miss Kellet, near Bailieborough, a young woman who appeared qualified by nature and grace to prove a help-meet for me, every way suitable to my most exalted views of religion. An attachment was formed,

and I resolved to enter upon the married state, providing my proposal were acceptable to herself and family. Consent was obtained ; we mutually sought the benediction of our heavenly Father on our intended union, which was consummated on the 21st of March, 1793.

I consider it worthy of remark, that from the time our marriage was determined on, the declaration of St. Paul to the Corinthians was constantly impressed on my mind : “ If thou marry, thou hast not sinned ;—nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time is short,” &c. How very soon did we feel the experimental force of these words !

Before the end of the month, my dear Jane was greatly affected with a complaint which speedily induced a confirmed consumption. Sometimes she was flattered with the prospect of recovery ; but, in general, pain and weakness pressed down her tender frame, and her mind was frequently distressed with perplexing doubts and manifold temptations.

To me it was a season of suffering, such as I had never experienced. Between tender sympathy and reflections on myself, I was often brought exceedingly low ; but I still felt sustained in the trying hour, and cheered by hope. I preached as I had opportunity, sometimes with remarkable freedom and consolation, in the town of Bailieborough, and various country parts adjacent ; and in private poured out my complaint before the Lord, with frequent days of fasting and humiliation. The cry of my soul was, that this corrective dispensation might be sanctified, and deliverance obtained according to the appointment of unerring wisdom. I shall mention a few particulars of the manner in which I was conducted through these trying scenes.

At the commencement of them, my soul was nearly overwhelmed with sorrow. One night I was thus com-

forted in a dream :—I thought a valuable and pious sister of our acquaintance came to visit us, and, in the language of heavenly sympathy, encouraged me to rely implicitly on Divine Providence, and expect a favourable issue. I thought my dear wife had retired, being dressed in such old and mean apparel as made me ashamed and uneasy, but to my astonishment she soon made her appearance, adorned with a robe of the purest white, and saluted our mutual friend with a smile of ineffable felicity. I considered it as a divine intimation to us both, that she would shortly exchange mortality for life.

A few weeks after, I was pleading with the Lord for my afflicted partner, and much drawn out in intercession during the forenoon; in the after part of the day I was most graciously dealt with. I was enlightened, humbled, purified, and comforted. It was powerfully impressed on my mind that I should preach the Gospel on a large scale, and with renewed energies; that my present trials were preparatory to future usefulness; that the affliction of my partner would terminate in glory, and all things work together for our eternal advantage. Nearly connected with this gracious visitation, was a conversation I had with old Mr. Joseph Armstrong, about three months afterwards. He appeared to be impressed with the same views; his words revived in my view those delightful prospects, with encouragement to patient endurance. In effect, saying to my heart,

“ Through waves, and clouds, and storms,
He gently clears thy way;
Wait thou his time, so shall this night
Soon end in joyous day.”

On the Easter Sabbath I had a memorable season, renewing my covenant with God, and receiving the Lord's Supper. I wrote as follows :—“ Lord, I have waited for thy providence to clear my way, and would

look to thee alone for that purpose. I am therefore resolved not to converse with the preachers respecting the discoveries made to my own mind on the subject of the ministry. Do thou who hast the 'key of David,' dispose the hearts of my brethren to concur with thy designs, or shut up every opening, and let none propose any thing contrary to thy good pleasure."

Many were the solemn and faithful warnings given me by my suffering wife, to be faithful to my heavenly calling, and to spend and be spent in the Lord's work. On the 5th of May, 1794, she gave birth to a son, whom we called Joseph. He lived until the 28th of July, and was then mercifully released from earth. On the first of August his mother ended her course, commending me to God. Almost her last words were, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

My departed wife was nearly my own age, and brought to the knowledge of salvation about the same time with myself. She had a good understanding in the doctrines of the Gospel, and was steady in her Christian profession. Her natural disposition being modest and affectionate, when renewed by grace, made her a most agreeable companion. With her I promised myself much happiness; but the gourd under which I thought to have rested, was suddenly blasted, and "the desire of my eyes cut off at a stroke." My heart bled in consequence, and my spirit was humbled in the dust; but, blessed be the Lord my God, from that hour my affection was transferred to things above, in such a manner as I formerly knew not, "where Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God;" and where those so dear to my heart were now admitted "to behold his glory."

CHAPTER IV.

1794.

THE concurrence of Divine Providence with the state of my mind at this critical juncture, was remarkable. Nothing could sooth the pungent feelings of my heart, but "looking unto Jesus," and preaching the word of his grace. When I directed my thoughts towards worldly affairs, they returned again to this point, as the proper centre of my supreme felicity.

At the late Conference, I was placed first on their reserve list ; and a preacher was now wanting to supply the place of Mr. Fitzhenry, a young man who was expected to labour on the Cavan circuit, but declined taking his appointment. I was called on to fill his place, and labour in conjunction with Mr. Alexander Moore and Joseph Hennin.

On the fourth of September, I went to the circuit, and found out Mr. Moore, who received me with tender affection. After suitable advice and prayer, he presented me with a travelling plan, and accompanied me part of the way to my preaching place. Before parting, he took me by the hand, and, in the most solemn manner repeated the apostolic injunction to Timothy, 2d Epistle, iv. 1, 2, "I charge thee before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." Had we been surrounded by thousands of witnesses, the impressiveness of the occasion, to my mind, could scarcely have been exceeded. In the spirit of sacrifice and devotion, I proceeded

to a country place, called Garbratten, and took for my subject Luke iv. 18, and thus commenced my regular itinerancy.

Our circuit was extensive, and our ministerial labours necessarily abundant. The accommodations for man and horse were sometimes very disagreeable to nature ; but I was saved from a disposition to complain, and generally found our dear friends kind and considerate. We had but few of those advantages which are now so generally furnished, “to make the man of God perfect ;” but we were not destitute of some valuable helps for intellectual improvement. In addition to our Bibles, and access to the throne of grace, there was also among us simplicity of heart, cordial love, and willingness to labour ; and being released from secular encumbrances, we “had nothing to do but to save souls.”

Some of the written advices of the preachers who had travelled our circuit, and known me from the beginning of my religious course, I here subjoin.

The following was from Mr. Murphy.

“MY MUCH-ESTEEMED BROTHER,

“I FELT gratitude to the Lord, who supported you under your late trials, and has now called you forth to declare his counsel to the perishing sons of men. Glory to God in the highest, who has set before you an open door ! Need I say, love your closet. Converse with Jesus in secret. Beware of trifling conversation. Do not talk too much of your time away. Search the sacred springs of truth, which are not muddled by human inventions. Converse with the holy prophets and apostles of Jesus Christ. Preach not only in the evenings, but early in the mornings, wherever you can get a few to hear. This will prove a blessing to your own soul, and endear you to the people. While you live near the mercy-seat, and set the Lord al-

ways before you, the instructions you give will be cordially received, and your reproofs rendered effectual. When you stand up to deliver your Master's message, the word of the Lord shall run as fire among stubble, or pierce the sinner's conscience like a two-edged sword : it shall come, not in word only, but in the power of the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."

From Mr. William Hamilton.

"I was heartily glad when I heard that you had entered the field with us, as an officer in the armies of Emmanuel. I have not seen the hand of the Lord more visibly displayed in calling a man to the ministry, than in your case. So Jonah is returned to Nineveh ! Well, let him now cry aloud, and spare not ! You will be tried and tempted, no doubt ; but how could you learn to succour the tempted, and help the weak-hearted, if you were not in every point tempted like them ? Come, my brother, dismiss your fears. ' Courage, your Captain cries.' He is ever near, saying, ' Well done !' Glory be to him, in his strength ' we march through troops, and leap over walls !' You have nothing to fear. Go right forward, preaching the word. Do not believe any thing the devil tells you. Whenever he lets you alone, you have reason to dread you are caught in his snare. Make it an invariable rule to be alone with God *before* preaching. When you conclude, after the congregation has sung the last hymn, speak a few solemn words. I have often known this do more good than the sermon. Meeting the classes after preaching, is of great advantage to ourselves and the people."

From my excellent friend, Mr. William Wilson.

"I do believe that dying to pleasure, though ever so innocent, is living to God. I mean passing by with a wise indifference many of those enjoyments which are not

directly prohibited, with a view to greater spirituality. But with many it will be a path strait enough to attend to our Lord's words, 'One thing is needful.' The very heathens, in their account of Hercules fighting with Antæus, afford us instruction on the subject of self-denial. For as long as he held up his antagonist in his arms, he could master him at pleasure; but as soon as his feet touched the earth, he got strength to renew the attack, and gave Hercules another dreadful battle. Now this fable, in a moral sense, is permitting our earthly passions to touch their element, which, although we had them almost or altogether dead, gives them new life, and immediately our conflicts and troubles are renewed. Therefore, if we would be good soldiers, let us not feed our enemy. Would we enjoy the comforts of the Holy Spirit, let us yield ourselves wholly to his guidance, and crucify the flesh; would we regain our paradise, let us reverse Adam's steps. If our Lord came 'not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him,' let all who would reign with him *'go and do likewise.'*

"Respecting sanctification, premising two prior steps, namely, *conviction*, which removes the old rubbish, in order to the laying of a fair foundation for a temple built by God; and a conformity to the divine will, as that of the three thousand at the day of Pentecost, or trembling and astonished Saul of Tarsus; then thirdly, it is the privilege of all such to seek a conformity to the divine nature, in righteousness and true holiness, or, in other words, *'perfect love.'* If it be inquired, whether this work be instantaneous or gradual? I answer, those who are entirely for the one or the other, should consider that the smallest as well as the greatest degree of grace, is instantaneously given to men, but afterwards both increased and improved. Sanctification begins in the moment of saving conversion. If there be added a stedfast and humble purpose to seek

for such a blessing, while, by a boundless resignation, the soul is surrendered into the hands of God, entirely closing in with his perfect will, joined with mighty prayer, we are still approaching nearer to the divine nature, until the last motion of the mind, which hindered the full union of the soul with God, is ended in a moment, as an heir to an estate comes in a moment to full age, though approaching to it in time that was past," &c.

This was a most unfavourable time for our ministry. The spirit of rebellion was brooding mischief through every part of the country. The Defenders, so called, were wofully *offending* their neighbours, and spreading confusion and alarm in every direction. Nightly depredations; plundering of arms and property; beating, burning, and killing, were frequently practised. The Protestants were necessitated to associate for mutual preservation, and their keeping watch by night became general. Unhappily, many of them did not attend to the monitory words of our Lord, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;" hence they became the victims of strong drink, and were influenced by revengeful passions, and a disorderly conduct, subversive of all Christian feeling, and unworthy the cause which they professed to honour and support.

It became a sifting time to many of our Societies. Some of our people were turned out of the right way; several were excluded by the exercise of wholesome discipline; and others died of a contagious fever with very short warning. It was a gloomy and distressing season, strongly marked by many instances of judgment and mercy.

That the preachers were suffered to travel unmolested, must be attributed to the special care of Providence. The only instance of our being attacked by the Defenders during the year, was a treacherous attempt to injure my-

self. This was on New-year's-day, 1795, when riding alone, in a happy state of mind, near Wattlebridge. A party of desperate looking fellows approached me, one of whom had a club concealed under his great coat; when sufficiently near to do me the intended mischief, he suddenly drew it forth and struck me violently on the cheek, then ran off, as did his comrades. The blood gushed copiously from my mouth, but through the mercy of God I was not seriously injured, which must have been the case had the blow been struck either higher on my cheek, or lower on my jaw bone.

As spring advanced, the dangers of the Protestants were alarmingly increased. Some of their nearest neighbours were their worst, because they were disguised enemies. A few of our friends and their families were marvellously protected in the hour of danger. I shall select as a special instance the case of John North, and his brother-in-law Bowes, of Drumlure, between Cavan and Belturbet. They lived beside each other, several perches from the high road. North had a numerous family, principally of daughters; Bowes had but one daughter at home, and a smart lad, his son, perhaps seventeen years of age. At midnight, March 16th, the Defenders made a dreadful attempt to destroy these inoffensive families. The manner in which they disguised themselves, rendered their appearance truly terrific. They had white shirts drawn over their clothes, small sticks tied across their mouths, and their faces smeared over with a mixture of red paint. The party consisted of about thirty men, well armed with guns and pikes. When preparing to attack our unsuspecting friends, they placed an ambush of their party near the high road, with directions to fire on any who should attempt to escape that way, and alarm the army in Belturbet. When the main body advanced, they attacked both houses, and broke open their street-

doors in the same instant. One of the ruffians began beating North, who was attempting to get out of his bed. His poor wife had grasped him in her arms to shield him from danger, or share his fate. The fellow then made a stab at her with a bayonet, which unaccountably missed its intended aim, and stuck in the wall (the room was confined with several beds, and must have been thronged between the assailants and the children of the family.) Just then, before he had time to repeat his thrust, there was the loud report of a gun, which had been fired outside of the house. This checked the hostile party, who ran to see what had occurred, while North and some of his children made their way to inquire if any of the next family had been murdered. It was an eventful shot, and thus accounted for. When the assailants entered Bowes' kitchen, they were resisted by a faithful dog, which in all probability prevented his master from being killed; for they slightly stabbed him in several parts of his body with a bayonet. While this conflict was taking place, young Bowes, having a loaded gun by him, took advantage of their confusion and manner of disguise, and seizing his piece walked through the midst of them unobserved, until his bare legs discovered him as he went out of the door. Immediately a Defender pursued him between the two houses, into the garden, and placing his back to a wall, attempted to shoot him, but the charge did not go off, though the priming was burned. The lad perceiving he was safe, presented his gun, crying, "Here's what won't miss!" and instantly fired; the fellow dropped down mortally wounded. His companions, on seeing this, were filled with diabolic rage. The man who had left beating John North, perceiving him in the street, cursed dreadfully that he would shoot him, and knelt down that he might take the more steady aim. He fired, and the shot took effect, fatally, indeed, but it was on one

of his own party who stood convenient ! and others of the family were delivered from the effects of this malignant outrage, in a manner equally wonderful. Thus confounded in their attempt, the whole party retreated, carrying with them their slain companions. But more evil awaited them. Not recollecting the persons they had placed in ambush, and the orders they had given them, of firing on those who should attempt to escape—and the concealed party not thinking that there was any danger of their own associates being defeated, fired on the first who advanced towards the road, and must have done fearful execution, as they were confined to a narrow lane ; but the extent could not be easily ascertained, as they carried away those who were there killed and wounded.

This, however, was not the full extent of their discomfiture. The report of so many shots roused the Protestant neighbours. Two of these, armed with guns, ran in the direction of North's house, and soon came in contact with two of the retreating party, one of whom was armed with a gun, and the other with a bayonet fastened on a long pole. These were challenged by the Protestants—the reply from the pikeman was, rushing on him at the same time with a fearful thrust, “ I'll send your soul to blazes ! ” Notwithstanding the well-aimed blow, he only pierced his great coat and inflicted a slight wound on his shoulder. The other Protestant instantly fired on him, and shot him dead. Whether the fellow with the gun had it loaded I have no account, but he also fell on the occasion. Their dead bodies were found in the fields next day, which, when stripped of their disguise, were discovered to be their near neighbours !

I was greatly affected with this whole account, and filled with solemn awe before God. Having lodged in Drumalure some short time previously, I was strongly urged in my mind to caution and warn them against join-

ing the drunken associations in their neighbourhood, and urged them to commit themselves *unreservedly* to the protection of heaven. I noted the circumstance of their deliverance shortly after the event took place—and there were other, and in my mind more remarkable evidences of the interposition of divine providence discovered on that occasion, for which I adore his justice and mercy, but forbear to mention. “O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee !”

Having slightly noticed the evil of intemperance to the true interests of society at that time, I shall here add a special instance of its murderous effects in private life, not long after. I had the account from persons of respectability, one of them an eye-witness. Mr. H. C., of B——, was an habitual drunkard. On one occasion, being exceedingly ill, he felt great remorse and agony of soul. His Methodist friends prayed earnestly for him; and he most solemnly covenanted with God, that if he restored him again to health, he would become a new man, and devote himself to his service. The Lord gave him the respite he sought, and his days were lengthened. Soon, however, he forgot his vows, and returned like the dog to his vomit. He was then drunk with scarce any intermission. When reminded of his vow, he put off the painful subject by boastfully saying, that he would die *like the thief on the cross*—he even mocked at religion. But “God is not mocked” with impunity! His sons followed their father’s example; and the wretched man lived to witness one of the most dreadful calamities befall some of them which that generation had witnessed, but without any saving effect upon his mind. In an unexpected hour, he was at last hurried into the eternal world. A drunken debauch effectually clogged the vital functions. His pious friends came again about him, and would have prayed, but found it impracticable. They had no freedom. Pre-

ternatural noises were heard, as if the timbers of the house were falling in with a crash. His very breath seemed burning, as if blue flames were issuing from his throat! His last testimony was most unlike the thief on the cross. It was this—*Whiskey, you have finished me!*

How many thousands have since followed him, though not all with equal steps! But who, even in the present day, will lay it to heart?

The conversion of Adjutant Malone, of the 8th Light Dragoon Guards, which occurred this year, may with propriety be inserted in this place. He also was deeply degraded by the sin of drunkenness. His pious suffering wife sought her consolation in God, and was instant and earnest in prayer for his salvation, though for a long season all her pleadings seemed to be in vain. His regiment being ordered to join the Duke of York's army in France, after Mr. M.'s horses, baggage, &c. were on board, he was suddenly remanded, and ordered on a recruiting party in Ireland. When the regiment went to France, a great part of it was cut off by a masked battery, which the enemy opened on them when crossing a bridge. The gentleman who filled his post was found among the slain. But still Mr. Malone was held fast by his besetting sin. His good wife, however, continued to cry to God, and she prevailed. One night, after his accustomed excesses, Mr. Malone awoke, supposing himself surrounded by devils and flames. He leaped out of bed, and began to cry to God for mercy and pardon. From this time, he forsook his sin. His apprehension of the wrath of God, and fearful looking for of judgment, continued for a considerable time, but mercy came to his rescue. A blessed sense of pardon was communicated; he rejoiced in God's salvation, and lived "soberly, righteously, and godly" for many years, a monument of divine mercy. From the night in which he was awakened, he said that

he observed the approaches and assaults of evil spirits, as well as the guardian ministrations of holy angels. He was a *visionary*; but through the sufficiency of divine grace, he was enabled to walk humbly and happily, as became "a brand plucked out of the burning."*

During this year, I was frequently required to preach funeral sermons. One of these was occasioned by the death of William Phair, my first class-leader, whose happy removal from a suffering state glorified the grace of God. Another was William Kennedy, who had been an upright, happy member of our Society for twenty-two years. He was greatly favoured in his last moments. Two nights before his death, he declared that his room was illuminated in a glorious manner, and his bed surrounded by the inhabitants of heaven, clothed in white robes; among whom were two preachers and his own son, who had departed this life. He was filled with joy, and burst forth into praise, in which he was joined by his celestial visitants. The melody, he said, was indescribable, while they sang with him the following verse:—

"The voice of my Beloved sounds,
Whilst o'er the mountain tops he bounds;
He flies, exulting o'er the hills,
And all my soul with transport fills:
Gently doth he chide my stay—
Rise, my love, and come away!"

* I have said that Mr. Malone was what we call a visionary; and many a strange thing his friends have mentioned, of what he was wont to tell them on the subjects of the invisible world, to me quite inexplicable. I would like to hear how the following fact can be accounted for, according to the doctrine of *Materialism*. When Mr. Malone felt the anguish of a wounded spirit, and apprehended himself surrounded with infernal demons, he would not be content to sleep unless some stout man would stay with him. One night he said to his attendants, whilst his watch lay on the table, "Now the devil is

He informed his family that he expected to live until I came in my turn to preach. On my arrival, I found him calmly waiting for his change. He assisted us to sing "Jesus, vouchsafe a pitying ray," &c. After commending him to God, we withdrew for a season. We soon returned, but the happy spirit was fled.

Shortly after this, I was called on to improve the affecting death of my brother-in-law, Joseph Kellett. He was a gracious, lovely youth, endowed with good talents, and for a season, appeared under a happy preparation for the sacred ministry. In consequence, however, of those associations already adverted to, in which he frequently joined, he lost the savour of piety, and buried his talent. His death was occasioned by a foolish exertion of bodily strength, which ruptured a blood-vessel. When he saw the tide of life ebbing to an apparent close, he cried to his mother and those around him, "I am visited by the judgment of God, who will not suffer sin to go unpunished. He gave me a talent, and I buried it—now the blood of many souls is required at my hands." In great mercy, however, he was spared a few weeks to recover his spiritual vigour, and became a most extraordinary penitent. He entertained no hope of recovery, but told his friends that he had "sinned unto death." He warned all who came near him, particularly his brother, to beware of departing from the living God. He mourned, and would not be comforted, until the Comforter would return, and assure his heart of peace and reconciliation. For this the intensity of his desire was so increased, and his strong cries and tears became so uncommon and so incessant, that

saying, just as fast as my watch is ticking, 'Captain C—— is dead—Captain C—— is dead!'" I was informed that when the account came of Captain C——'s death, it exactly corresponded with that

some of his friends could not endure to be present; and when they fled, his cries pursued them wherever they went, until he sunk exhausted and speechless, and was apparently dying without the peaceful answer. But just then, in an instant, did the Holy Comforter come to his disconsolate heart. The faculty of speech was for a season restored, and his shouts of "glory! glory!" were so loud and so often repeated, as to recal those who had fled from his bitter lamentations, that they might join in his holy triumphs. Shortly after, he sang two verses of that most appropriate hymn—"I'll praise my Maker whilst I've breath," &c. He failed when attempting the third. Almost his last words were—"Glory be to God! I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

About this time, I rode a considerable distance to Cootehill, that I might have the privilege of conversing with an eminent Christian, Mrs. Burns, in her last moments, (where I first saw my respected brother and cotemporary, Mr. Charles Mayne.) She spoke to me, as she was able, of the Lord's goodness, and her own unprofitableness, greatly regretting the non-improvement of her earthly talents. She spoke words of comfort to my heart; and after I had bade her farewell, sent her maid after me with a half-guinea wrapped in paper, particularly requesting that I would give it to such of the Lord's poor as I saw in the greatest necessity. That evening, after preaching, a young man of my intimate acquaintance—a person much devoted to the duties of the closet, called me aside, and informed me of one with whom I was well acquainted—a mutual friend, who had been in a state of extraordinary destitution. He further observed, "I have gone as far as the claims of my own family will admit, to afford relief; and this morning I retired to bring her distressing situation before the throne of grace, and came away, fully persuaded that *you* would

bring the requisite relief." Smiling with satisfaction, I said, "James, where do you think it could come from?" "Come, come," said James, "I know you have it." "Then," I replied, "here it is for you!" These are the facts, and what can infidelity reply? To suppose that the almost irresistible desire I felt to visit that dying lady—the prayers of my pious friend at the same time—the seasonable donation, agreeing with the impression on his mind—the relief thereby afforded to a suffering saint;—to suppose that a train of events so harmonious and coincident, was only the effect of chance, must argue marvellous blindness of heart! To me it was a most encouraging proof of that ever kind and wakeful providence which conducts our steps, sees in secret, hears our prayers, and "numbers the very hairs of our head." Glory be to God! With regard to Mrs. Burns, Mr. Crozier, who was particularly attentive to her, mentioned to me in a letter that she suffered much in her last moments, but "languished into life." The last words she spoke were, "I am going to God." Beckoning for a drink of water, when it was put into her hand, she lifted up her eyes to heaven, and fell asleep in Jesus.

Another well-attested instance of a similar kind, which occurred in the neighbourhood of B——, not long before that which I have related, will afford additional proof of the special care of heaven over the suffering pious poor. The husband of A. C—— went to America, leaving her behind with four children, until he should be able to provide means to come for them, or pay their passage. Like many others, she was disappointed of this hope; for he died in a strange land, and she was left a desolate widow, whose only refuge was the Lord of Hosts. One morning she had not wherewith to supply a breakfast for the children, who were becoming very importunate. On this trying occasion, she applied to the throne

of grace, where she endeavoured to bring all her wants, with many tears and pleadings, that the Lord would be mindful of his promise, and prove a "father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow." When she arose from her knees, she felt that her heart was lightened of its load. On opening the door, a neighbour woman stood without, greatly affected, for she heard what had been passing within. She had plenty of broken victuals with her, being just returning from the field, where she had been supplying labourers with breakfast. She cried, "Oh, Nancy, here's plenty!" and thus supplied her immediate wants. She next made the case known to their friendly neighbours, which created an interest in her favour, and soon led to such a change in her circumstances, as enabled her to bring forward her children in a creditable manner.

Early this summer, commenced my acquaintance with that eminent man, the Rev. Dr. Coke. He saluted me with the cordial kiss of charity, and greatly delighted and edified me by his amiable private manners, and zealous public ministry. Twice I heard him preach in Clones, and can with renewed pleasure refer to the subjects. One was his favourite theme, the conversion of the negroes, from Psal. lxxviii. 31—"Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands unto God." In discussing the doctrines of this text, he quoted Noah's prophecy, Gen. ix. 26, 27, accommodating it to his present subject with much ingenuity. America he considered to have been first peopled from Asia, by the descendants of Shem: the posterity of Japhet were providentially "enlarged," and "persuaded" to emigrate from Europe, to dwell in the tents of Shem, the former abodes of the American Indians; and "Canaan became his servant," through the abominable machinations of the slave-traders, by which the injured Africans were brought into bondage with their children; thus becoming "a servant of servants" in *free-born* America, and the

British Colonies!! Ethiopia he described as the representative of all the sable race, “stretching out her hands unto God,” lamenting their mental and moral degradation, and cruel treatment; imploring redress from his righteous administration, and the blessings of the Gospel.

In preaching from Ephesians ii. 8, he solved a question respecting the present exercise of faith, which at that time I found to be truly seasonable and satisfactory.

“ If, by acting faith, you mean looking continually to Jesus, or beholding him who is invisible at all times, and in all places, I answer, this is the happy privilege of believers. It is the life, the delight of a believing soul, thus to look up to a reconciled God. But if by acting faith is meant—can we now believe, so as to obtain pardon, renewing grace, or perfect love? I answer, we cannot. When, however, by waiting upon God in earnest prayer, we feel the intercourse open, the influence of divine grace imparted, and the heart humbled and broken, then we may believe for *all we want*, and find the salvation we seek, ‘according to our faith.’”

As the season approached when we expected to leave the circuit, we had more than ordinary evidence of the quickening power of the Holy Spirit in our congregations.

Our quarterly love-feasts in Ballyhease and Newtown-butler were greatly favoured. In the latter place, the Spirit was poured from on high; insomuch, that we could not dismiss the people who had assembled in the morning until a late hour in the evening. Divine love united our hearts, and we parted with a glorious hope of meeting again with the church triumphant in the heavens.

CHAPTER V.

1795-6.

I WAS appointed by the Conference, 1795, to labour on the Coleraine circuit, with Messrs. Matthew Stuart and Thomas Brown. One of my last duties on leaving Bailieborough was to preach at the funeral of my friend and brother, George Templeton, who had died in the Lord. After which, I took a hasty farewell of my earthly relations—a last one of my beloved grandmother, and hastened to my appointment. Mr. Moore, my late worthy superintendent, accompanied me to his father's house, near Ballygawley. Next day we parted with feelings of mutual and strong affection. “He lifted up his voice and wept,” whilst I pursued “my solitary way,” committing myself to God. In Coleraine, I was received with such cordiality as still brings a sweet savour to my heart. My first sermon was from Isaiah xlii. 16. I felt its truth in my own experience. The Lord gave us an early token for good. One faithful man, whose memory is still blessed to that Society, said on returning home, in the confidence of holy expectation, we will have a revival of God's work this year. He prayed with his family, as was usual, lay down happy in God and slept; but he was not to awake until the heavens are no more! This was the end of Robert Douthett; to whom, doubtless, “sudden death was sudden glory.” He was a man of God; industrious and frugal in his habits, and rich in good works. Every week, “as the Lord prospered him,” he laid apart all he could spare from his family and business, for the necessities of the poor, committing the future to God. His hope was not frustrated, as many in

that country can testify; for the Lord took care of his widow and children in a manner worthy of his never-failing promise.

The Coleraine circuit, at that time, included a considerable range of the two Counties of Derry and Antrim. It encircled the Antrim shores from Portrush to Glenarm; thence it stretched to Ballymena, Portglenone, Bellaghy, Magherafelt, and Newtownlimavady—including numerous small towns, villages, and country places. The Society in the town of Coleraine was, perhaps, as holy, happy, and respectable for its number, as any to be found in Ireland.* We preached and lodged in the old barracks; where he who respects not persons or places, often visited us in mercy, and made the place of his footstool glorious. The leaders were judicious, zealous, and united in the spirit of holy love.

I was greatly blessed in the society of Mr. John Galt, jun. Oh, how often did we plead with God for all his image, and for all his fulness! The preachers were of one heart and of one soul. We felt the Lord to be with us, and much did we need his help. The grievous fall of a preacher who had lately laboured here, was now discovered, and brought on us “a great fight of affliction,” and this affliction was vastly aggravated by his coming to lodge in the town. He frequently came to hear me preach, but on one memorable evening, Mr. Stuart coming home unexpectedly, took the pulpit. He was standing up to give out his text, when this offending brother came into the congregation; immediately on seeing him, Mr. Stuart turned to Galatians v. 19, &c., and whilst warning his hearers against “the works of the flesh,” he so described the sin and the sinner, that every eye was turned to him. His situation

* See Appendix, A.

became intolerable ;—he arose murmuring, and left the congregation. Before he got clear of the door, the preacher most impressively cried out, in the words of Nathan to David, *Thou art the man!* and immediately dismissed the congregation. I put my head between my knees, and trembled every joint. My mind being carried forward to the day of Christ, when the secrets of men shall be revealed, and the workers of iniquity sentenced to a *final* departure from his presence and the glory of his power.

The person who occasioned us such anguish of heart, I never remember to have seen since that time. I trust there is satisfactory evidence that he obtained mercy; was useful in another place; reared a respectable family, and had hope in death; but, notwithstanding, I must record it as the firm conviction of my soul, that the destructive consequences of his sin will continue to affect the town where it occurred, and prevent the spread of the Gospel for more than one generation. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”

January 27th, 1796, I heard the affecting account of Miss C——’s death, Ballyronan. She was a lovely young woman, and “against example, singularly good.” The last time I saw her, was, I believe, the last time she heard preaching. The subject was that blessed truth to a believer, “To die is gain.” She took suddenly ill, and in a few days slept in the Lord. How precarious is our hope of human felicity! My valuable friend, Mr. J. G——, had been most tenderly attached to this young lady. His family, for a considerable time, was averse to a matrimonial union, but had at length yielded their consent. He had written to apprize her of the favourable change in their sentiments, and immediately followed the letter himself, with a view to the consummation of their expected nuptials; but the desire of his eyes was cut off at a stroke!

Having called at the house in which I lodged the day before, he heard the afflictive tidings, which nearly proved fatal to himself. When the combined influence of religion and length of time had considerably restored his wounded heart, he wrote an allegorical improvement of the subject, which I would have inserted, only I prefer the following extract from an anonymous pamphlet, doubtless from the same hand, and on the same affecting subject:—

“If natural innocence and amiableness of manners, could have purchased life, the price was fully offered here. Or if internal piety could have guarded off the arrow of death ‘its wound had ne’er been given;’ but the most amiable virtues that ever adorned the human mind cannot protect us from the monarch of the tomb. He pursues his chase through all the avenues of life, and is sure at last to give the fatal wound.

“Nature in all her lovely gifts, and ornamented with the religion of Jesus, conspicuously shone in the amiable Miss —; but a contagious fever turned her ‘beauty into corruption,’ and blasted the hopes of admiring friends. Now she appears in robes of glory, and joins in the high hallelujahs of heaven. The recollection of those happy moments I have spent in her company, with the anticipated years of delight which I counted as my own, create a pleasing succession of sorrow and joy in my soul. Though submitting to the divine will, I hope I am not criminal in saying, ‘I’ll oft repeat her pleasing name, then drop a tear or two.’ Miss — died 12th January, 1796.”

Shortly after coming to Coleraine, I was invited to attend a Quaker’s meeting. A venerable American friend, spoke most feelingly on the subject of the ministry. His testimony was so congenial to my own experience, that I noted it for my future advantage. It was to this effect:—“I remember how I have been wrought upon by the divine principle within my own heart, enlightening

and showing me my misery and condemnation, on account of sin. When I strove to fly from its rebukes, it still pursued me, erecting a judgment-seat in my conscience: it was within me a spirit of judgment and of burning, which drank up my spirits, and wasted my body. But by waiting upon the Lord, and keeping the word of his patience, I found, through the blood of Christ, my sins pass away as the morning cloud. Then was my mind filled with concern for my relations, friends, and the whole world. This concern prevailed upon me at times to speak a few sentences in religious meetings, which experienced friends approving, they encouraged me to exercise my gift, and go forth to visit other places. This concern brought me from my native land to this kingdom. Many baptisms and dispensations I have undergone, which the Lord saw necessary for my good to edification. I have found myself liable to think more favourably of my qualifications for the ministry, than those could do who had more solid experience. And God being a 'Spirit of judgment to those who sit in judgment,' by their counsel, taught me the beauty of order, and also the necessity of attention to the apostle's caution, 'lay hands suddenly on no man;' and, of consequence, the importance of waiting in the order of God, to find his hand with me, which is his power, to forward me in every good word and work. Various are his dealings with me to the present time, suffering me to hunger for the bread of life, and to feel my spiritual poverty, that he might enrich me with his inward kingdom. I have been taught, that they who will be vessels unto honour, must take heed that they be not 'marred upon the wheel;' for many have been so, and involved themselves thereby in a wilderness of sorrow. Their hearts must be as the gold that was to cover the altar, beat out by the hammer of the Spirit, in its various operations, until it becomes truly consecrated, whereon to offer spiri-

tual sacrifices. As to the time of their going forth in the service of the Gospel, they should be as the men of Israel: after being delivered from Pharaoh and the Red sea, 'the cloud and pillar' continued over the camp, so long as it was the divine will they should continue *stationary*; 'when the cloud removed, they also removed.' As to our station, we must be willing to fill up any place in his courts that our Lord sees meet, whether it be a burden-bearer, a hewer of wood, a drawer of water, or any more honourable office, according to his own appointment. It is often my allotment to be a burden-bearer, having the weight of many souls upon my mind. Thus hath the Lord led me to the present; thus he leads his people from crying out as Paul, 'O wretched man!' to witness they have passed from 'death unto life;' yea, and 'who shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?' Thus he leads them 'from glory into glory,' and upon each glory there is a defence, until 'they are more than conquerors, through him that loved them.' "

In reviewing the affairs of the Coleraine circuit during the year I am now recording, I am convinced, that if Methodism, and those who laboured and suffered for its support, had not been sustained by divine grace, it must have sunk under the mighty and combined assaults against it, from earth and hell. I never knew a Society more sifted by the enmity of Satan than Ballymena; yet even there we had a few precious souls—veterans in the cause of God. who stood like pillars in the evil day, or walked with Christ in white when others had defiled their garments.

Disaffection against Government had infected both town and country; whilst infidelity and profaneness raised the standard of open hostility against the religion of Jesus. There was not so much to fear from midnight assassination, as on the Cavan circuit; yet the preachers had most for-

midable difficulties to contend with, and much to suffer, especially in this neighbourhood. Secret societies were every where multiplied, and the spirit of revolt and rebellion became general. Considering our known attachment to Government, and the faithful testimony which we bore against abounding iniquity, I am astonished how the preachers were preserved. In one country place, where they were all said to be "up," I preached to a vast crowd which came to hear me, from Matt. iii. 7, warning them with all my heart "to flee from the wrath to come," and take refuge in Jesus; yet they departed without discovering any hostility.

On one occasion, I wrote thus in my journal: "Good brother Brown having fallen sick, I had to ride above thirty miles to supply his lack of service. Various have been my conflicts these few days. Fightings without, and fears within. I scarcely ever knew what reproach and contempt for Christ's sake were until now. I am humbled before God, and scarcely know how to act; yet through the whole, the Lord is blessing his word, and the prospect brightens."

Notwithstanding discouraging appearances, we formed a few Societies. One in Garvagh, which, although its members were few, was full of zeal and love. Another in Roseyards, where I had some abusive treatment at my first visit; rude fellows having pelted me with potatoes. When the service was concluded, I stopped the congregation to pray for my persecutors; and on my return, found an open door for the Gospel. I was informed that the Seceding minister, by the liberal Christian spirit which he evinced, very much contributed to our favourable reception. In Ballymoney, where it was reported that New-Light and Payne-Light were predominant, I preached "Christ crucified," and joined a few in Society. In Bal-lyronan and Church-hill we had a blessed revival; and, in

a place called the Glebe, many souls were converted to God, and united to his people.

Among those who were called to join the church triumphant, was Sarah Stafford, Bellaghy. I saw her on her dying bed. "Tell my friends," said she, "as you go round the circuit, that Jesus is to me all that he promised." Another was Mrs. Gordon, Ballymena, mother to David Gordon, the preacher. She had been a member of our Society for forty-six years, sustained a character for great sincerity, and died in the Lord. I preached her funeral sermon.

In the course of my ministerial visits, I sometimes called at Belgrove, the residence of Miss M'Clean. She was the prudent manager of a most interesting family—three boys and three girls, all orphans, the children of her sisters. She attended several of her near relatives in their last mortal struggles, and watched over their remaining offspring with maternal solicitude.

Twelve years after this, I had the pleasure of meeting this excellent woman in the hospitable mansion of Mr. Joseph Wright, Donnybrook, Dublin. He is the husband of one of her nieces. Here Miss M'Clean enjoyed, in the decline of life, a rich reward for her attention to her orphan charge. Mr. Wright is a member of our Society, well known for his Christian liberality. Mrs. Wright belongs to the Moravian Church. Here frequently the ministers of our common Lord, though differently denominated, meet together, being all one in the spirit of the Gospel.

The close of our year was distinguished principally by an increasing spirit of love among preachers and people. Our last sermons seemed best, and the prospect of good increased to the close of our labours.

In the beginning of July, having received my appointment for Sligo circuit, I bid farewell to my Ballycastle friends, some of whom had adorned the Christian charac-

ter for many years. On the 12th, I preached my last sermon at Billy-church, from Gen. xxviii. 20, 21, and took a long farewell of those most affectionate people, and of the Antrim shores.

Often, when visiting this part of the circuit, have I been struck with its magnificent scenery. The celebrated Giant's Causeway and Dunluce, with their neighbouring rocks and headlands—*islands, caves, curiosities, and prospects*—especially the broad Atlantic, heaving its mighty waves over the gigantic pavement, are sufficient to inspire the attentive mind with solemn and delightful sentiments. In winter there is an awful sublimity in the rolling of the sea, and loud, wild, dashing of the breakers against the elevated rocks, which are fixed to oppose them like everlasting barriers.

The 15th was my day of departure from Coleraine, in company with Mr. William Bradshaw, a Christian friend, being earnestly recommended by our dear brethren and sisters in Coleraine to the grace of God.

CHAPTER VI.

1796-7.

My journey to Sligo was rendered very agreeable, by pious conversation, and the romantic scenery which was gradually unfolded to our view, but principally from the "soul's calm sunshine." The mountainous country of Donegal presented a most delightful variety. We passed through one valley which was wholly encircled with mountains. Another long range, called the Barnsmore, are in such close contact at their base for several miles, as

to leave only room for a road between them; and again, on entering the open country, there appeared a beautiful lake, extended between other mountains, ornamented with fine plantations and a handsome gentleman's seat.

We spent the Lord's day in the town of Donegal, and on Monday, the 18th of July, I reached Sligo in mercy. The accounts I had heard of this place were of a gloomy character, yet here it pleased the Lord to bless my soul, and my labours, beyond any thing I had ever witnessed. My colleagues were Messrs. Thomas Ridgeway, and William Wilson, my early instructors in righteousness, and my friends.

I waited a few days in Sligo for their arrival, and preached several times. We had good congregations, and the divine influence was soon apparent; young persons and children were much favoured. Some became deeply convinced of sin, and others obtained peace with God. My own heart was greatly enlarged. Even in dreams I had singular indications of the ingathering of souls into the fold of the great Shepherd, which were blessedly realized.

Our circuit circumscribed a vast tract of country. A considerable part of it lay in the County Leitrim, extending from Manorhamilton to Mohill. It intersected the County Roscommon, including Strokestown, Elphin, Carrick-on-Shannon, and Boyle. It embraced also Ballymoat, in the County of Sligo, and Colooney, with many inferior places. We had abundant labour, and considerable success. Even as early as September, the general prospect of good justified the following account from a friend:—"The Lord deals bountifully with us; you will rejoice to hear of such a revival. Loughpoint and Tirerah are flaming; Ballymoat budding; Boyle bearing much fruit, and Manorhamilton flourishing."

In the meantime, Satan and his agents were uncom-

monly active. The preachers were misrepresented, and our Societies slandered. Some would have us hostile to government; others that we were all Orangemen. Indeed, some of our calumniators and persecutors died suddenly and awfully, whilst we passed on doing the Lord's work, and suffered no harm. Alarming apprehensions of a speedy insurrection, and reports of invasion were quite current, especially when the French fleet entered Bantry Bay. It was a little before Christmas, at the midnight hour, when the alarm occasioned by that event reached Sligo. The drums beat to arms, and the militia were called off; but we had no serious disturbance nor interruption in our labours. The faithful were crying mightily to God, and some of our dearest friends were removed from the evil to come. Among these were Mrs. Fleming and Mrs. Slacke—the latter of whom will be remembered by God's people, particularly by the preachers with whom she was acquainted, with the liveliest gratitude, while memory remains.

Having mentioned this eminent Christian, I am happy in being able to subjoin a short memorial of her character, and a few paragraphs from her last letters. On my first visit to Annadale, the residence of Mrs. Slacke, Mrs. Fleming, and Mrs. Brownrigg, sister of Dr. Whitelaw, of Dublin, were there on a visit. Speaking of these, in a letter to a friend, she thus writes:—"We experience a happy intercourse with our God and each other. Our love grows like trees, planted by rivers of water, and spreads all around, to embrace all who are on the Lord's side, Christ being all and in all. We feel no envenomed dart—evil surmises are not admitted—slanders we do not hear." Happy fellowship, to the world unknown!

To another, she thus expresses herself—"I generally think *you* are in the room when a few pilgrims gather together to besiege the mercy-seat, so very present does

my heart draw you ; such a union of soul do I feel with you, that it seems as if distance were nothing—absence nothing. May we ever possess the same heart, walk in the same path, pronounce the same language, and continue drawing water from salvation's spring, till the time of our probation being filled up, according to the will of our heavenly Father, we shall hear the Saviour say—' Well done !' May grace, like the falling dews from heaven, refresh your soul, and comfort you in Christ Jesus !"

The following letter was addressed to Mr. Archibald Murdoch, when preparing to depart on a foreign mission. Some of the many sacrifices made by Christian Missionaries, and their friends, are described in language which can only be dictated by the heart :—" The sacrifice which you offer unto the Lord is, I doubt not, acceptable to him, for you did not confine the offering to yourself, but have caused many to resign what they held very near to their hearts. I speak of others as of myself. It is no small privation to part with a faithful steward of the riches of grace, whose example and advice have proved to many so great a blessing. A knowledge of my own vileness makes me almost wish that you were to stay, and help me to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness ; but my heart reproves me for this selfish desire, and tells me the necessity for the mightiest exertions to snatch poor heathens out of the thick darkness with which they are overspread. May you be the favoured instrument to turn them to the Sun of Righteousness, whose bright beams will enliven their hearts, and direct them to the haven of present and eternal rest and glory ! May God direct you, and your dear fellow-labourer ! May he lock up the storms and smoothe the ocean ! May he withhold the sun from burning you by day, and the chilling damps from affecting you by night ! May he temper the climate to your constitution,

feed you with meat the world knows not of, give you to drink of the fountain of life, and enrol you in the list of the highest order of martyrs ! For you are about to live a dying life for his name's sake, and the good of souls. Oh, I almost seize a glimpse of the Spirit which conveys you over all the concerns of this mortal state, as it did Philip, to instruct the people who are now lying in darkness and the shadow of death ! May you see of the travail of the Redeemer's soul and be satisfied ! He who is faithful and true, hath promised that he will give to his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. Go forward then, in the name of the Lord ; and when you hold sweet intercourse with him, in every time and place, then remember a poor weak, worthless worm, but your most affectionate sister, friend, and servant, whilst life is lent."—A. A. S.

Mrs. Fleming becoming seriously ill, Mrs. Slacke accompanied her home, and attended her continually. She describes her feelings on the occasion to a dear friend. "*You have stood by the bed of a dying companion ; you have held her clammy hand ; you have heard the devout breathings of her angelic soul ; you have witnessed her dove-like patience, and marked the smile of seraphic joy brightening her placid countenance ; you have supported her falling head ; you have performed every office of tender affection ; you have watched her looks, listened to her heavings ; and you can conceive my feelings, my employment. Pray for me. This dream of life will soon be over—reality will then commence. All things here are shadows but the love of God. Yesterday evening she appeared like one who had so run as to be ready to receive her great reward. I cannot leave her long, as she gets some slumbers when reclined on my bosom, when every other posture seems uneasy.*"

To the same, describing Mrs. Fleming's death and

character, and her own readiness to depart and be with Christ, dated Oct. 18th—"I must take a painful review of the time since I last wrote from Abbeville, once the abode of sweet sister F——, but now whenever I may see it, must only bring the melancholy remembrance of past pleasures, pure as those of angels, and only differing from heaven in degree. Though for some time before she left Annadale she seemed worse in respect of her dreadful complaint (a dropsy,) and afterwards it gained on her strength every day, yet she possessed her soul in patience, and in the midst of suffering her faith and love shone more and more brilliant, and her songs of holy triumph employed the sleepless nights."—[Mrs. Slacke had left her seemingly better, to attend a quarterly meeting in Sligo.]—"What were my feelings to hear, the very day after the meeting was over, that '*she had died.*' The sound thrilled through me. I did not speak, but I believe the situation I was in alarmed my friends. They used every method to soften my sorrow. I suppose the shock stirred up a bilious complaint.

"Mrs. Fleming was deservedly dear to all who knew her worth; for she possessed genuine piety and meekness, sweet gentleness, sound sense, strong faith, and triumphant love—love which will burst from the grave to meet her Redeemer!

"How shall I thank you for reminding me of the sacred comforts which the promises of a merciful God hold forth, to support his weak children on their way over a rugged passage to eternity? His word is a light to our feet, and a lantern to our steps: it cheers this gloomy vale, and gilds the distant prospect of the Holy City. Through the glass of faith, it shows the lofty turrets of the new Jerusalem, and causes us to rejoice in hope of the glory which shall be revealed. There we shall rest from

our labours, the tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever."

The following is part of her last letter, written from Abbeville, but a few days before her translation to that glory she described, and for which she was graciously prepared:—"I trust I shall believe all things shall work together for my good—the chief good, that of my soul: for my poor frame is crumbling into its native dust; my hand trembles while I endeavour to trail the pen over this paper. Yesterday I came here. On my driving to the door, ten thousand heart-rending thoughts rushed into my mind. I could not for some time leave the chaise. I longed to cry aloud—and if I thought God could not hear, I would have screamed, but the omnipresence of the Eternal Majesty awed me into silence. I bow, and with tears submit. Though I groan, I murmur not. I hope to bear all things as I ought for a few days more, and then through mercy be dismissed in peace, giving glory to my God. Adieu, dearest Miss —, continue to love and pray for your most sincere and affectionate,

Sept. 6.

ANGEL ANNA SLACKE."

From the sudden shock, which she refers to, she never revived. All who conversed with her after that time seemed struck with her unearthly appearance, and peculiar earnestness of spirit. When any of her friends were parting from her, it seemed as if they should "see her face no more." She called hastily at my lodging, when passing through Sligo, and gave me her parting benediction.

On Friday, Nov. 18, the third day after she returned home, in the evening she made tea for Mr. John Bredin, who had long been resident in Mr. Slacke's, and retired early to her chamber. Having prayed with the maid who

accompanied her,* she sent her down as she did Miss Slacke afterwards, until family prayers should be over, which was always attended to when the clock struck ten. Immediately after worship, Miss Slacke returned, but the happy spirit of her parent had taken its flight to glory. It is supposed that while the family were engaged in prayer, she had been on her knees in the bed, joining them in spirit, and in that spirit and attitude her Lord found her waiting his coming. She had fallen on her face towards the bed foot when she expired. On visiting the family the next time, I was greatly affected and blessed. She left her husband, whom she faithfully and affectionately endeavoured to help on his way to heaven, and a numerous and lovely family of children, to profit by her example.

In Sligo Society, the work of God prospered during the whole of this year, especially among the young men. One of these named Feeney, was much persecuted by his father, being of the Church of Rome. I wrote him an expostulatory letter, which induced a reply, charging me with making him a disobedient child, and trusting "that God would deliver him out of the gulf into which he was plunged." I then wrote to him two other letters, endeavouring mildly, but faithfully, to touch some of the leading points in the Popish controversy, to which his letter referred. To these I had no reply.

Here I had frequent opportunities of conversing with Mr. Albert Blest, a principal man among the Independents, who treated me with great kindness. He sometimes drew me into the controversy respecting particular redemption, but I found it injurious to my peace. I needed establishment in grace, rather than "doubtful disputations."

The consciousness of my inability for the work in which I was engaged, often cast me down; but in various ways,

and by different means, and often by singular and seasonable help, would the Lord revive and comfort me: sometimes in conversation and prayer with my brethren the preachers, and the young men of the Society, among whom Mr. G. Arbuckle distinguished himself by brotherly affection. Mrs. Brew, and others among our pious sisters, often strengthened my hands. I have been greatly blessed in visiting an old disciple, Sarah M'Kim, to whom "the hoary head was a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness." She was deeply devoted to the Lord Jesus, and although never taught to read, was wise to salvation, and had letters from several preachers, one of them from Mr. Wesley. She was ready always to give an answer of the hope she possessed. "Sister M'Kim," said I, on one occasion, "when it is best with you, how do you feel?" "Just in the verge of heaven," was her reply. "When it is worst with you, what is your experience?" She instantly rejoined, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

At Loughpoint, a country place, we had a great increase to our Society, and a remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit. It was less than two years since preaching had been introduced into this neighbourhood; we had sixty persons in church-fellowship, and the greater part of them evinced a renewed character. In Ballymoat and its vicinity, several were deeply convinced of sin, and filled with peace and joy through believing. In Manorhamilton, and the country round, we had remarkable displays of the power of God, and many seasons of refreshing from the divine presence. I was greatly blessed among them, especially in Lurganboy. In Leitrim, Ballinamore, and Newtongore, we endeavoured to dispense the truths of the Gospel, and saw fruit to our labours. In November, I preached in a country place called *Loneagh*. I was thoroughly wet going to it—besides, the entrance was

almost inaccessible; before preaching, I nearly fainted with cold and exhaustion, but the word came with power. What a blessed compensation for toil, to see such an earnest congregation in a mountain, who came through rain and mire bare-footed, from one to four miles round, that they might receive the Word of Life! We had also an extraordinary work of God in a little village, one of the poorest in Ireland, called Carrickencur. The man who received me was converted from the error of his ways before I arrived, while in the fields calling upon the name of the Lord. He roused others to flee from the wrath to come, who joined the Society in a right spirit, with cries, and tears, and supplications for mercy. Grace triumphed here, where sin once reigned unto death. In a country place named Brickliffe, where we had a very promising work, and large congregations, I was invited to preach on a Lord's day morning in a Presbyterian meeting-house, which had been shut up for some time. I told the elder who asked me to preach, that, were it likely to produce contention, I would rather decline the offer; however, being solicited, I took the pulpit, and preached from 1 Kings xviii. 21. The key had been left in the door, which another elder perceiving, who was provoked at our being admitted, locked us in and went away. Providentially a ladder happened to be in the house—one of the windows was taken down and the ladder placed outside, so that, by some climbing and management, we all got out in safety. We stopped in the green, and prayed for our enemy. The people were very happy, especially brother Risk, who observed openly, that he was once confined for Satan, but he blessed God for being “this day confined for Jesus.”

In Boyle, our dear friends were of an excellent spirit. Many were the delightful seasons we enjoyed there, especially in prayer-meetings held in Mrs. Searle's par-

lour. A visit from Mr. Averell was much owned of God. To me he proved a son of consolation. While he was administering the symbols of the dying love of Jesus to a few devoted souls, I felt an extraordinary willingness and power to consecrate my little all to a covenant with God in Christ, which was followed with much spiritual vigour.

It was here I first saw my friend and brother, Mr. Gideon Ousley, that eminent Irish missionary. He was not then in our itinerant ministry, though exceedingly zealous in his public and private, ordinary and extraordinary labours, calling sinners to repentance, particularly the Irish. The night before he came, I had a most impressive dream respecting a man I had never known, with a solemn aspect, and a defect in one of his eyes. He appeared to be present where I was about to preach. Satan endeavoured to exert an uncommon influence to prevent my first prayer; this stranger, I apprehended, came forward and overthrew him; immediately an astonishing work of God commenced. When I saw Mr. Ousley next day, I was quite surprised. His face was familiar. He was the man I had seen in my dream. A remarkable influence attended his ministry that evening, and I shall scarcely forget his conversation, and pleadings with God the same night, when we retired to our bed-chamber.

We had bitter persecution in this town, much of it by cruel mocking and contemptuous sneers. The Earl of Kingston screened us from open violence; but in almost every direction, the word, "*swaad—swaad*"—an abbreviation of swadler, sounded after us. On one occasion, when preaching in the street, the well-dressed friends of Satan's cause, made an uproar with singing and shouting, as if calling hounds. Our friends, instead of shrinking, gathered round me to share the reproach, or whatever might follow, in the true spirit of martyrdom. In Carrick-

on-Shannon and its neighbouring places, we had good times, though I do not recollect any thing very remarkable, as to the spread of religion. There were, however, two remarkable occurrences, which I shall notice.

I went to visit a pious old woman, one of our people, who was greatly reduced by poverty and sickness. I found her in the chimney-corner of a deserted house, attended by her daughter; and I have seldom beheld a more distressing sight. The daughter could earn no money, on account of her long attention to her mother. They seemed to be absolutely destitute of all earthly comfort, or means of sustaining existence. The old woman's mind was tempted and oppressed with doubts; she had nearly given up all her confidence, thinking that if God had not cast her off, succour would have come from some quarter. I prayed with her, and endeavoured to justify the ways of Divine Providence with his sinful creatures, leaving her a small gratuity. In a day or two after, I preached in Mr. Slacke's. While there, sitting with a company of respectable friends at breakfast, my mind was led back to the suffering widow and her daughter. I mentioned the circumstances of the case, chiefly with a view to contrast the different situations of some of God's people, and excite gratitude for our mercies. The relation produced a powerful and sympathetic feeling; first a shower of tears, and then a shower of silver, amounting, perhaps, to twenty shillings, were the result. This I conveyed to the poor woman as soon as possible. I found her still dark and doubtful. Having again endeavoured to direct her mind to the God of all consolation, I showed her the money which his providence had so seasonably supplied. The sight of it acted like a miracle. She was overwhelmed with a sense of contrition and gratitude; and from that moment the disorder left her. Thus was God glorified, and "the widow's heart made to sing for joy."

While preaching in an adjacent place, a short time before I left the circuit, I was visited by a Roman Catholic—a poor man, but considerably above the common description of that class of people. His errand was to tell me what God had done for his soul, and converse with me on the subject. There was a genuine simplicity in his manner, and a language of his own, in the relation that he gave; but I believe he was savingly converted to God. He told me that he had for a long time felt his soul distressed and burdened, on account of sin; that he went to his clergy, and performed all that they enjoined, without obtaining any relief, and knew not what more to do, until happening to speak of his situation to a Protestant neighbour, he lent him an old Bible. This he read constantly at night, when he got his family to bed, lying on the hearth, by the light of a little fire, praying earnestly for pardon and peace, for the sake of the Lord Jesus. He did not pray in vain, for his soul was filled with divine consolation. The Bible now became his directory. Two particular cases he mentioned. He read in Prov. iii. 9, “Honour the Lord with thy substance,” &c., and when he dug up his potatoes, he laid by “the first-fruits” of the best of them, for those who had none. Again he read in Heb. xiii. 2, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers,” &c. He then prepared a bed in a warm corner of his cabin, where he entertained the houseless poor. For some considerable time he did not know of any person who enjoyed what he felt, until at a certain wake, he became acquainted with Richard Stevens, one of our local preachers, who, he soon found, could speak of similar blessings. This was almost my last time there, so that I cannot tell how he persevered. He was in good hands; for the “Lord was his Shepherd.” May we not hope that the general distribution of the Scriptures throughout Ireland, has in some such manner, directed thousands into the truth as it is in Jesus,

though we shall not know them until "that day when he shall make up his jewels!"

During the year, I preached a few times in Elphin, where we formed a small Society. But few Protestants lived in the town, and I was informed that six of them were clergymen. Several Catholics attended preaching, and some of them joined Society. We had some opposition, but the Bishop would not give it any countenance. I had a good opportunity here of remarking how extensively even one pious family may contribute to the general diffusion of the Gospel of Christ. I lodged with William Leard. His parents were truly devoted to God, and were diligent in training their children in the doctrine and discipline of the Lord Jesus. They now had the fruit of their pious endeavours. One of their sons was a serious clergyman of the Established Church; another of them, an excellent man, lodged the preachers on the Castlebar circuit; and another, who lived with his mother, was a class-leader. One of the daughters was the wife of pious Mr. Stevens, of Carrick; another of Mr. Shera, a class-leader, and another of Mr. Munns, a private Christian. All these received the preachers in turn with cordial good-will. Mrs. Leard, their mother told me, that their custom was, when her husband lived, to pray three times a-day in the family—a practice she still continued. Their father used frequently to express his confidence, that the Lord would not leave one soul belonging to him behind in Egypt.

Many parts of this circuit were visited with the cheering influence of the Gospel, besides those I have mentioned. Our year was now drawing to a close, and we had many proofs of the presence and blessing of the Redeemer. Seven new classes had been formed, many sinners were converted, and backsliders restored; the people of God among us made happy advances in divine

knowledge, and holy love, and nine of them died in the Lord.

The characters of this gracious work were not distinguished by much noise in our meetings, but by great earnestness in hearing, deep convictions, and joy in the Lord : it was “ with power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance,” 1 Thess. i. 5.

I had, at this time, letters from my dear friend, Mr. Galt, which mentioned the progressive state of the revival in some parts of Coleraine circuit, especially in Garvagh, which afforded me great comfort. “ They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.”

Our last quarterly meeting in Sligo, was a glorious time : life and love prevailed. In Manorhamilton, the meeting was partly hindered by the death of a persecutor, who was shot the morning before while on guard. In Annadale, we had a precious meeting and a solemn parting. I bade farewell to my dear fellow-labourers in peace, after we had received the memorials of the death of Jesus, from the hands of the Rev. Mr. Leard. Having spent a week in visiting my native place, I returned to Sligo, Manorhamilton, Mohil and Boyle, bidding them, with a full heart, a final farewell !

CHAPTER VII.

1797-8-9.

HAVING received my appointment for Youghall circuit, with Mr. John Darragh, I proceeded to my station without delay, a journey of 160 miles ; persuaded that as I had committed my way to the Lord, he would accompany and direct me in the path of duty. The first evening,

I reached Athlone, and met Mr. Averell going to preach. The next day we proceeded together to Bracka Castle, the seat of Mr. Handy; and the following to Rosenallis, where we both preached. Then proceeded to Tentower, near Durrow, Mr. Averell's own residence, where I endeavoured to improve the Sabbath. In the forenoon, the Church service was read in a part of Mr. Averell's house, which had been appropriated to the worship of God; after the evening service, I was called to witness an affecting scene. The Rev. Mr. —, a church clergyman, called Mr. Averell and I into a private apartment, and falling on his knees, in the most solemn manner, took us both to witness, that from that moment he would be unreservedly devoted to God. How he has kept his vow, the Lord will bear witness. I was informed that his lady was related to one of the noble families of the land. They both appeared to be seeking the kingdom of God. In Clonmel I had a foretaste of heaven, while preaching to, and conversing with our Christian friends; but in Cappoquin, an outpost of Youghall circuit, I had a cold reception, and no encouragement to return;—it is a fact, though painful to relate, that the man who at that time rejected the Gospel, died shortly after in a most unhappy state of mind.

On this circuit, I found a very different state of things from that I had travelled. Youghall was newly formed into a half-residence, where we were to remain two weeks at a time, and to board among our friends, among whom were several respectable, and well-informed persons. We had to preach frequently to the same congregation, and were expected to visit much from house to house. Our out fortnight's labour included Castle Martyr, Middleton, Mallow, Doneraile, Charleville, Kilfinnen, Mitchelstown, Kilworth, Fermoy, Tallow, &c. In these places the Societies were generally small and poor, and the few

who possessed genuine piety thinly scattered. The aspect of public affairs was awfully portentous. Assassinations were frequent: the country was under military law: and, after the rebellion had broken out in Wexford, report after report reached us of the most appalling nature.

Under these circumstances, my spirit was greatly humbled before God. I was conscious how much I needed an increase of grace, and improvement in ministerial talent, that I might glorify him in the post of duty and of danger, and stand prepared for whatever I should be called to do or suffer in those trying times. Urged by these feelings, I endeavoured, as I had time and strength, to improve my private and public opportunities, and devote myself to the work to which I was called by my gracious Master.

My colleague was an amiable man, and a good preacher. We laboured in love; and the Lord gave us some gracious fruit, particularly in the town of Youghall, and among the soldiers in Middleton. The family where I lodged, Mrs. Day's, was most agreeable; their kind attentions invigorated my health, and cheered my mind. I had happy retirement, and my soul prospered: discouragement gave way to hope, and our little Zion was built up in "troublesome times."

Visiting, instructing, and praying from house to house, became my delightful work; and among the poor, the advantages were soon manifest. Their temporal necessities, however, brought on considerable inconvenience, as my private resources were soon exhausted. In this difficulty, the first expedient to which I resorted was, to invite a respectable young man to accompany me; "when his eye affected his heart," he was ready to communicate. Mr. T. Taylor, on these occasions, often caused the "bowels of the hungry to bless him." But I could not long continue thus to tax his generosity, and was there-

fore obliged to try other methods ; but as the demands of the poor pressed on me, the burden became almost insupportable. Under these painful circumstances, I was relieved and encouraged by the following dream :—

I imagined myself standing near the door of a venerable mansion, before which was a beautiful lawn. In a short time, a vast number of persons, most wretched in their appearance, from age, poverty, and disease of every description, surrounded me seeking relief ; having no means of supplying their numerous wants, I felt exquisite distress on their account. Just then, a most heavenly looking man made his appearance ; he came to me with a benignant smile on his countenance, and bade me be of good comfort. He knew, he said, the cause of my anxiety, and that an abundant supply was at hand. At the same time, it was impressed on my mind that the person speaking to me was the Rev. John Fletcher. He then ordered a large table cloth to be spread on the grass, and discovered to me a vast store of meat, drink, medicine, and whatever was suitable for the refreshment of the needy multitude. He immediately engaged me to assist in supplying their various wants, and in the delightful employment I awoke.

Shortly after this, by stating the matter to a few benevolent friends, they took counsel how they might most effectually relieve the indigent poor of the town. Subscriptions were proposed, visitors appointed, and a system of benevolence put in active operation, which diffused the blessings of Christianity most extensively through the abodes of wretchedness. More deplorable cases can scarcely be conceived, than were discovered and relieved. Numbers in the lowest grades of ignorance and depravity were also instructed in the truths of the Gospel, and obtained mercy through Christ ; a few of whom died rejoicing in hope of eternal consolation.

Amidst the apprehensions arising from a consciousness of my insufficiency for the great work in which I was engaged, it is reviving to consider how often a variety of undesigned intimations, the simple remark of a friend, or a friendly letter, roused my soul to perseverance, or poured the balm of consolation into my heart. I was told of a worthy brother, now a hoary veteran in the cause of Christ, who had preceded me on this circuit (Mr. Archibald Murdoch), who, travelling on foot to his place, was so overcome by fatigue and exhaustion, that he was constrained to lie down on the road-side, unable to proceed : here he offered up his feeble prayer, that if his great Master had any more work for him to do, he would be pleased to renew his strength, and, if otherwise, take him to his eternal rest. The God of all consolation heard his cry ; his spirit was revived, and his body strengthened to pursue his journey, and renew his labours. This account sunk deep into my heart. I thought, surely none can be more indebted to the Lord Jesus than myself, or should more willingly labour and suffer “to testify the Gospel of the grace of God!” A few extracts from letters which I received at the same time, will transmit to others those sentiments and motives which were then urged upon my heart by my beloved friends and brethren.

From Dr. Coke.

“OUR gracious Lord has been wonderfully kind, in giving our English Societies, on the whole, an increase of 4,000 members, notwithstanding all the convulsions and distractions they have experienced : * * * and now, my brother, I commit you to God’s holy keeping. May he make you more and more a polished shaft in his quiver ! Indeed, I expect that Ireland will soon become a praise in the earth for vital religion ; and that God, even in these

distressing times, will carry on his own work more rapidly than ever. It is a great honour to be employed in so extensive a way, in the immediate carrying on of the greatest work of the Lord which has been known since the primitive times."

From my late Colleague in Sligo, Mr. Wilson.

"I FIND nothing so profitable to me as *trials* joined with mighty prayer. In every trial, and in every company, if we go over on the Lord's side, closing in with him in a holy covenant, a heroic vigour arises in the soul. The sure way is, 'the whole counsel of God.' A little slackness makes the next cross grievous, and the next prayer cold and fruitless. What months had gained by vigilance, may be lost by a moment's unwatchfulness. Oh! that our pure single eye may in every design, word, and deed, steadily keep looking unto Jesus!

"With regard to your ministry—when you are all alone, calm, and master of yourself, in the very presence of God, assisted by beams of heavenly light, then mark out the fair circle of his *most perfect will*; and when you come forth into company, conscientiously avoid whatever does not come within that circle. Join with this the prayer of faith, and suitable studies."

From Mr. W. Hamilton.

"BE all things to all, as far as you can, that you may win the more to Christ. Make all the acquaintance you can, and keep them. This will tend to enlarge your own heart, and extend your usefulness. Writing to our friends is an important part of our duty. They will be soon out of our reach; therefore, with tongue and pen let us cry aloud, and spare not. We should not write merely, and

say—How are you?—I am well—and fare you well! but exhort, reprove, rebuke, and comfort, with all the love and fidelity of our station. Then my friend has something for his money, which may prove a blessing to the third or fourth generation: perhaps when our bodily presence may be weak, our epistles may be powerful.”

Thus, amidst the horrid alarms of war, were the ministers of peace provoking each other to love and good works! The following gives an account of the prosperity of the work of God on the Coleraine circuit; whilst it furnishes an experimental proof of the vanity of preachers trusting to their best attempts at pulpit preparations, without the continual supply of the Holy Spirit:—

“I must tell you of that little church in Garvagh, you have been the means, in God’s hand, of planting. There are about thirty persons in Society, of earnest, weeping, and praying souls. The great folks there had much curiosity to hear ME preach. I fixed on a day, and composed a fine sermon, *to convert them all!* According to appointment, I went; the great folks came; and I gave out my text, but forgot my fine sermon! O the confusion of soul which I felt, when I began to open my polished net, which I had so cunningly prepared, that none could escape, nor a critic find in it an unequal link! But it was now a ravelled hank, and I could find neither its beginning, end, nor middle! I was as the fable represents the Jackdaw, when found out, and stripped of his borrowed plumes. Supposing that all the congregation saw how I was caught, I strove to descend from the pinnacle of the temple to the foot of the cross, and humbly to preach JESUS to the people. It now appeared as if the heavens were opened, and that the house were filled with the glory of God! In the meeting, after preaching, there were shouts of praise and rejoicing, such as I had never witnessed,

which continued until eleven o'clock at night. Glory be to God for this dispensation! Amen.

“A few weeks after this, came on the quarterly meeting, but the house could not contain the people. The church was asked, and the Rector raged—but the magistrate who kept the keys was of another mind, and said, ‘God forbid that I should prevent his word from being preached,’ and ordered the doors to be thrown open. I spent the last sabbath of the month there, and commenced preaching about six o'clock in the evening, but could not get the congregation to dismiss until between eleven and twelve o'clock.”

The 15th of October, I spent in the city of Cork with Mr. Averell; he preached twice in the chapel, Hammond's Marsh, and I in the French church. The congregations were large, and the grace of God richly dispensed. One young man sent up a note of thanksgiving, for having, on that occasion, obtained its saving power in the remission of sins.

In the close of the year, 1797, in the town of Kilfinnen, as a few friends of Christ were closing the blessed Sabbath solemnly, and devoutly endeavouring to comfort and encourage each other, a most extraordinary and inexpressible consciousness of the overshadowing presence of the blessed God was felt. The spirit of prayer was poured out upon the whole company, which ascended from our hearts to the throne of heavenly grace with acceptance, through the mediation of Jesus, whose precious name was like the ointment poured forth. What a memorable season! What a preparation for trials! My heart was unutterably filled with the love of Christ, and drawn forth with ardent desire to glorify him on earth, and then enjoy him for ever in heaven.

Notwithstanding the indications of rebellion which marked the commencement of 1798, and increased as it

advanced; notwithstanding assassinations, fearful apprehensions, and military movements, we were suffered to labour on, to travel unmolested, and preach the word of life as usual, in all our regular places. As to myself, I was kept "as far from danger as from fear;" blessed be the Lord!

In the beginning of June, I had a letter from Mr. Averell, in which he refers to the state of things in his neighbourhood, near Castle Durrow, and how himself and the Methodists in that place were thereby affected:—

"We never saw a time in which it was more necessary to live *in God*, than the present. Our country is all alarm. Most of the other sect are thirsting for their neighbour's blood. This thirst is wonderfully increasing and spreading through all parties, insomuch that it is hard standing still in any posture but on our knees. There is not a night that we are not in apprehension of being attacked by murderers. The Protestants on my ground, assemble in my house every night for protection, and God has hitherto preserved us, though we are the only little body in the country who have not arranged ourselves in any military corps, being determined to trust God with our souls and bodies; believing that Jesus will save to the uttermost all who come to the Father through him. It is a time of trial, but it is a time of great support to faithful souls, for we find grace equal to our day: and if we are not full of God the fault is all our own, for heaven is on our side, and the God of boundless love is our commanding officer. Our little company is like the Israelites in the wilderness, surrounded by warlike and inimical nations, yet we are perfectly safe, and rest in peace. Pray for us, that we may hold out to the end without sullyng our garments with the filth of distrust or ungodly fear. I had a very happy tour of four months. The church of God I found rather in a fixed mourning state, than other-

wise, save in Sligo and Belfast, where the work of God is sweetly progressive.

“ May our great leader bring great good out of what he is permitting of evil to befall a guilty land ! It appears to me that he is impatient of sinners and their ways ; and that those in particular who have rejected his counsel and his word, have come to the night of their day, and that God’s awful visitation of fiery wrath is now bursting over their heads.

“ Remember I expect you to keep garrison with us, one night at least, on your way to Dublin. I hope we shall travel together.”

I think it was about the 4th of this month, that a horrible scene was displayed in Youghall. A man of the name of Desmond, a tobacconist, was charged with being a rebel, and lodged in the town jail. It was alleged that a conspiracy had been formed in his house, for the purpose of killing the outposts who were guarding the town, with which one of his workmen in whom he would repose no confidence had become acquainted. This man they determined to put out of the way. Accordingly, at a time when the soldiers were drawn out to attend the funeral of an officer, they effected their sanguinary purpose. They sent for the poor man to Desmond’s house, where they stabbed him in several parts of his belly with a sharp penknife, and then dragged him to the tobacco loft, where they suspended, and left him hanging, as if himself had perpetrated the deed. Very shortly after, a young lad who had been employed about the place going to the loft, saw him, and was dreadfully affrighted. He ran through the house without stopping, and when he had gained the street, proceeded to give information to the mayor, crying, as he ran, “ Murder, murder !”

The house was immediately surrounded by the soldiery, whilst an order was issued through the town that the

houses should be all closed, and no person seen in the streets. The perpetrators of the crime were found in the house. Providence so ordering it ; for when one of them, a stranger, was riding out of town after the murder, his horse fell, and so severely injured him, that he returned to the house where the man had been murdered. Here he was found. The dreadful triangles were set up before the door, when he was tried by scourging. So were two other men, one of whom was Desmond's brother, on whose shirt the stains of blood were said to be marked, where the penknife had been wiped. They all for a while denied their personal guilt, and began accusing each other, until the servant maid was examined ; her evidence being clearly against them all, they were immediately hanged, and their dead bodies cast into the river ! The whole procedure was conducted under the window of the prison where the unhappy brother was confined. His house was then dilapidated, and his goods destroyed. All this occurred in the course of a few hours. On the previous day, a Priest was scourged, in consequence of being charged with having signed the death warrant of another man, who had also been murdered. These were such days of horror, as I pray God, may never return to my native land !

I had a letter from a friend, dated the 23d, respecting the state of affairs in and about Coleraine. " I know," he says, " you are not a man of much politics, yet I shall relate concisely the facts of the proceedings here. It was in the town and vicinity of Antrim, where the rebels first assembled to give battle, in which engagement two hundred of them were killed, and about thirty of our men. Those who escaped, with many others, took possession of Randalstown, of Ballymena, and, I may say, of Ballymoney ; for the troops that lay there, as well as in all the neighbouring towns, not being able to face the insurgents, fled

with the most of the loyal people to Coleraine. This was the place the rebels had in view, but never had the courage, I should rather say the *power*, to attempt it. So soon as the news arrived of the insurgents being on their march to this town, the labourers and tradesmen, by Lord H. Murray's permission, cast up bulwarks, intrenchments, &c., and the other inhabitants got under arms; the troops went to meet the rebels, and the yeomanry, with the inhabitants, were left in possession of the town. They were, however, only assembling in that quarter, nor could they meet the army, but fled in all directions. Several of their leaders have been since taken, and executed. Coleraine was their object; but in all their plans, one thing was forgotten, "the Lord reigneth" and hears the cries of his people. And now, through his blessing, Coleraine has been, and yet is, preserved, defended, and kept in safety, without firing a gun! O, what a protector is the 'Lord of hosts!' Is it not amazing that those towns which were wicked to a proverb, and have for many years rejected the Gospel, are now heaps of ruins? Ballymena got off with the loss of a few lives. Here were twelve soldiers prisoners, whom the rebels brought to the street to hang; but, falling out among themselves, the poor fellows made their escape. Ballycastle and Garvagh are safe. There is a small town in this neighbourhood, in which there is just one man who steadily evinced his religion to be real; and though it may appear strange, yet it is true, that although the entire town was burned, yet he, his family, and connexions, were preserved in the midst of the flames!

"As I know you are such a loyal man yourself, you will bear with me while I repeat only one circumstance more on this subject. The Methodists in this town were much against taking up arms, until imperative necessity demanded it; but so soon as that appeared, we did not

wait for asking, but were determined to die before we would desert our good king in the time of trouble. But the King of kings fought for us, and for our town, and through his grace we remain unhurt. ‘Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,’ and confide in him, then all would be well for time and eternity!’

My four probationary years being now concluded, I was *virtually* admitted into full connexion; but the importance of the charge I was about to deliver up, the length of the road to Dublin, and the great danger of travelling, prevented my attending Conference.

My appointment was fixed for the city of Cork, with Mr. James M’Mullen. When I viewed the responsibility of this station, I would have gladly resigned it for a country circuit, but I had no alternative. Not having chosen for myself, I had the more freedom to implore the divine benediction on the portion of labour allotted me by my fathers and brethren, and went forward trusting in the name of the Lord. My first encouragement on going to Cork, was a letter from Mr. Averell. In this he remarked, “The God whom you worship is still with you, because you *are his*, by the blessed ties of unconditional devotion. *He* has sent you to a place that he spied out for you, so will he, I most humbly trust, be peculiarly with you in your labours, where you have now so wide a field. By the tender mercies of God, we have all been preserved from the incarnate furies that have, for some time, been thirsting for our blood. The promise of the Lord to Jeremiah has been fulfilled in us, we are ‘a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, &c. against the people of the land.’ I believe why he has so signally preserved us, is not to be idle, but that he has some great work for us to accomplish in these awful times. May he give us light unto his divine counsels, and resolution to fulfil all his pleasure!”

When I had spent a few weeks among these truly hospitable and pious people, I was able to calculate, in some measure, what I had to hope and fear. My stated duties were, to assist in feeding a numerous flock gathered in from the world, which had long been the care of the good shepherd ; and to preach constantly to well-instructed and large congregations : duties rendered doubly imperative by the awful calamities of a civil war. It was, therefore, necessary to redeem every sacred moment for the purposes of mental and spiritual improvement, and communicating public and private instruction.

I feel greatly indebted to the Lord for the help I then received from my colleague, who was a sensible pious man, and an able preacher. Mr. L. K., a walking library, was my companion. He preached frequently, and in private conversation, loved to communicate. The stewards and leaders were men of God, and truly affectionate. In the recollections of those days, their names are associated with sensations of lively pleasure and gratitude. In such company, the labour of love was rendered doubly delightful. I was conducted through another various year, far beyond what my boding fear suggested ;—I trust, also, somewhat better prepared for the future services of my blessed Master. Mr. M'Mullen was very strict in discipline ; a determined enemy to frippery in dress ; in consequence of which, a few were offended ; but, in general, the Society increased and prospered ; brotherly love abounded ; the public band-meetings were acknowledged of God, and the congregations continued to increase.

During my stay in Cork, we had the advantage of a long visit from Messrs. A. Murdock and William Sturgeon, when going on their voyage as missionaries to the West Indies. Though I was not favoured to be of their number, I felt much united to them in affection and de-

sign. When they were leaving Ireland, I accompanied them to Cove. They sailed on the 18th of December: had the Lord prepared my way, gladly would I have shared in their dangers and toils.

About the same time, the mysterious providence of God, directed to us the missionaries who were shipwrecked at the Old Head of Kinsale. These were Messrs. Jenkin and Taylor, who belonged to our Society, with a pious Moravian, his wife, and Miss Grant, who were going to the West Indies on the same errand. The ship in which they sailed, was tossed with tempest, until it became a total wreck. Much of their property might have been saved, but for the merciless plunderers, who forcibly tore all away. When they arrived in Cork, they were most pitiable objects; but our brethren and sisters embraced them with the tenderest affection, and took them to their houses and hearts, until they were again supplied with a suitable outfit for their voyage.

Mr. Jenkin, one of the shipwrecked missionaries, has given a lengthened account of their sufferings and deliverance, in the Methodist Magazine for 1819, and recorded a noble instance of Irish hospitality and Christian philanthropy, shown to them by Romanists, in the town of Kinsale. Such characters are in happy relief from those who disgrace our country, and are worthy of being transmitted to the latest posterity. When our friends were leaving the scene of disaster, their forlorn appearance excited the sympathy of a respectable innkeeper who met them on the road, and sent a young man to escort them into town, with directions to his wife to afford them every accommodation and comfort that their house afforded. She most liberally entered into his views; and although informed by Mr. Jenkin that they had lost their property, and had no means of remuneration, it was with considerable reluctance they were permitted next day

to look out for the Methodists, or remove to the preacher's lodging.

The parish Priest of the place where the wrecking occurred, was kinsman to their kind hostess, to whom she warmly recommended Mr. Jenkin, in the expectation of his being able to procure some of the lost property. He received him with courtesy, and promised to use his influence for that purpose, expressing, at the same time, his fears that all would be fruitless, on account of the prevalent wickedness and infidelity of the people. After the Sabbath, when the Priest was to warn and exhort his congregation on the subject, Mr. Jenkin again waited on him. According to his apprehension, he observed, that his appeal on the subject of restitution was ineffectual; but he engaged to make trial again and again. The conclusion of this interesting interview, I shall give in Mr. Jenkin's own words:—

“I always consider it my duty,” said the Priest, “to exert myself to the uttermost in behalf of every stranger in distress, but particularly for you, who, I have been informed, are a missionary, going to preach the Gospel in the West Indies, or elsewhere; but you are now reduced to great distress and sufferings in a strange land. You and I are ignorant why this affliction is permitted to come upon you; but the time is fast approaching, when we shall both know why God sometimes suffers his servants to fall into troubles in this world. You see my situation; it is far from being an elegant one. I have begun to build this house, and have not yet wherewith to finish it; but I hope to do it next year. A part of it is fitted for my habitation, and I request you to come and live with me: we will have all things in common, as the disciples had shortly after the day of Pentecost. It is true, you and I differ in judgment, touching some particular points of doctrine, and forms of worship, but we both agree in

the most important matters; we both serve the same master, aim at his glory, and are labouring to save souls from ruin. You are therefore my brother in Christ, and as such, are entitled to an equal share of all I possess.

“Many other expressions of a like nature he made use of, and pressed me greatly to partake of what he had in possession. At his earnest solicitation, I took some refreshment with him; after which we parted to meet no more on earth, but with full expectation of meeting in heaven.” Mr. Jenkin adds, “I had written to Dr. Coke, giving him an account of our distressed condition; and he forthwith sent me a consolatory letter, together with a draft for two hundred pounds. This timely supply enabled us to pay our kind hostess for the care she had taken of us without expecting any remuneration.” From Dr. Coke’s consolatory letter to these sufferers, I shall subjoin the following extract, which may remind us of the language of the Apostle, 2 Cor. i 3—6. The Doctor observes, “The devil wants to prevent your usefulness, and God suffers him for the trial of your faith. I have been shipwrecked; I have been carried down a river; I have been for seven weeks expecting to be drowned every day; and for nine weeks was kept on an allowance of stinking water; I have fallen from the side of a ship, and just escaped being crushed to pieces against a wharf. I was almost drowned in a canoe; and in two or three instances, every thing but lost! But what do I say? I was as far from being lost as if I had been in the most apparent security; having underneath and around me, ‘the everlasting arms.’”

In the month of May, 1799, Mr. Averell paid us a visit, and stayed with us four days. The accounts he gave of his preservation, through the scenes of cruelty and blood with which he was surrounded, and the preservation of the faithful in his neighbourhood, as well as in

every place where the rebellion had spread its horrors, were most astonishing proofs of divine faithfulness, and Almighty protection.

Amongst many of our friends who had this year exchanged mortality for life, was a young man named Gilbert. In visiting him in his last moments, I was unutterably blest. Whilst a few believing souls were attending him, it appeared as if heaven itself had descended and filled every heart. He spoke of the redemption which is in Jesus, while able to articulate, and, when speechless, waved his dying hand several times in token of victory.

Rebecca M'Entire, an old disciple, closed her life of tribulation for glory; as did sister Lawson, of the Limerick militia.

At the close of my time in Cork, the subject of marriage became once more a matter of serious thought and advice. Of the uncertainty of all human felicity, I had some experience. Hitherto the Lord had helped me in my single state; yet it appeared to me, that with very few exceptions, marriage was much safer. It was the ordinance of the blessed God, to better the condition of man, even in paradise. The holiest and most useful men recorded in the Holy Scriptures before the coming of Christ, were married; and the Christian law, whilst it excludes all licentiousness, and limits the ordinance to its original design, proclaims that "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." The "help-meet," prepared for me by a wise and gracious Providence, had an excellent character for good sense, fervent piety, and usefulness, among the young women of the Society, of whom, at that time, there was a goodly company. The judgment of our best friends, sundry remarkable intimations of the divine will, and singularly coincident circumstances, united to determine our choice. I was, therefore, married to Miss Catharine Daly, on the 29th of June, 1799, in the French Church, where

many witnesses united their ardent prayers for an abundant blessing on our union. Since then, we have seen many returns of our wedding-day, with increasing thankfulness to God, for his unceasing goodness to us and a numerous offspring.

Conference was now at hand; but for the same reasons which prevented me last year, I declined attending, and prepared to follow the order of Providence in my next appointment. The Christian companions of my dear wife were greatly affected on the occasion; the dear people among whom I laboured, abounded in expressions of kindness, and our last meetings were such as to afford the happy anticipation of our finally meeting where "friends in Christ shall part no more!"

CHAPTER VIII.

1799-1800-1.

By the appointment of this Conference, I was removed from the pleasant and edifying localities and associations of the city of Cork, to superintend the Wicklow circuit. My colleague was the venerable John Price, who was worn down by labours and afflictions, and burdened with a large family: but he lived by the faith of the Son of God; he was constantly happy in him who loved him; preached as he believed and lived, and was consequently much blessed in his ministry.

The ample field of our itinerant labour, extended from the town of Bray, within twelve miles of Dublin, to the baronies of Fort and Bargey, beyond Wexford; and included besides these towns and numerous villages

and country places, Enniscorthy, Newtownbarry, Carnew, Gorey, Hacketstown, Arklow, Wicklow, Newtown-Mount-Kennedy, Delgany, Rathdrum, Tinnehealey, Ballycanew, &c.

The general aspect of the circuit was singularly diversified. In some parts, the scenery was romantic and beautiful, but the pleasure "situate in hill and dale," only served by contrast to render the appalling devastations of war, which met the eye in every direction, more painful. Our congregations too, with few exceptions, presented a most affecting appearance, the men wearing military costume, and the women deep mourning. The Irish address to the English Conference for this year, contains the following mournful statement:—"To attempt a description of our deplorable state, would be vain indeed. Suffice it to say, that loss of trade, breach of confidence, fear of assassination, towns burned, countries laid waste, houses for miles without inhabitants, and the air tainted with the stench of thousands of putrid human carcasses already cut off, form some outline of the melancholy picture of our times. However, in the midst of this general confusion, we and our people, blessed be God, have been wonderfully preserved. * * * * But whilst we bless God for our preservation, we have to lament, that on the Carlow and Wicklow circuits, and many others, Societies have been scattered, and many of our people left without a place to lay their heads. This may, in some measure, account for the diminution of our numbers this year."

On the Wicklow circuit, Mr. Alexander Moore, travelled during the rebellion; preached when and where he found it practicable, and endeavoured to preserve the remnants of our Societies, which had been so fearfully scattered, during "the dark and cloudy day." Succeeding him in such a state of things, we needed wisdom and

strength which nature could not supply. To obtain this, we looked to the Lord, and in his name persevered through many privations, and preached the word through the length and breadth of our circuit. In accomplishing this round of ministerial duty, our accommodations were curiously varied, and our intercourse with society of every grade, very extensive. In Mrs. Tighe's, we had state beds, conversed with senators, ministers, and ladies of rank and talent; we were attended by liveried servants, and cheered with the sound of the organ; perhaps in the next place, our lodging was on straw in some out-house, or newly prepared dwelling. Our labours were multiplied and incessant, and we had formidable difficulties to contend with, but they were few and light compared with the sufferings and privations of our people, who had but recently suffered the loss of their dearest relations by murder and massacre; who had witnessed the burning of their houses and the destruction of their property; were driven to embrace the rock for a shelter, or wander from place to place, destitute, tormented and afflicted. When we came to them in the name of the Lord, they received us gladly, and shared with us such provisions as they had, with mournful cordiality. In attending many of our places, we might truly say that "our life was in our hand;" but it pleased God, who comforts the distressed, to bless our visits to their spiritual advantage: several new Societies were formed, others were established and increased, and many souls were converted to the Lord. Among these was Mr. John Rogers, who was richly endowed with the grace of God, and began successfully to preach the Gospel.

In July, 1800, I first attended the Conference, and was there, with seven other young preachers, solemnly admitted into full connexion, before many witnesses. I was re-appointed to the Wicklow circuit, with John Wilson, jun.,

a deeply pious, simple-hearted, affectionate man, but not possessed of talents for preaching or usefulness, equal to my late worthy colleague, Mr. Price.

There was a dearth this year, nearly approaching to famine, which greatly aggravated the distress of the suffering poor, and was deeply felt by the whole community; but still the gracious work of God progressed blessedly. We could sing of "mercy" as well as of "judgment," and the name of the Lord was glorified.

During my sojournment in this country, I enjoyed the advantage of an acquaintance with the Rev. T. Kelly, son-in-law to the amiable Mrs. Tighe, already mentioned. I occasionally heard him preach, and we sometimes travelled together. He was clothed with humility, and zealously promoted the cause of Christ. On one occasion, we visited Arklow together, and sent a messenger to request the use of a corn-kiln, for the accommodation of a congregation, which was refused. Mr. Kelly then proposed to make it a matter of prayer, after which we went to the owner ourselves. He immediately consented and Mr. Kelly preached from 1 Pet. ii. 24, with much freedom and effect. May those who are now favoured with suitable places of worship, with Christian society, and a living ministry, remember the former days, and gratefully improve their present advantages, by bringing forth much fruit to the glory of God!

Here, also, I first met with that most extraordinary character, Lorenzo Dow, from America. I heard him preach in Enniscorthy, and a living powerful influence attended his ministry, which convinced me that God was with him. After some time, he came to the neighbourhood of Hacketstown, recommended by some friends; not being able to procure a lodging place for the night, he called at Mr. Jones's, where I sometimes preached. When he rapped at the door for entrance, the family was

alarmed, as the country was infested with robbers, and it was now late; but while they hesitated, Mr. Jones felt that portion of Holy Scripture brought forcibly to his mind—"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."—Heb. xiii. 2. He yielded to the suggestion, the stranger was admitted, and the blessed result was, that two of his daughters were, through his instrumentality, deeply convinced of sin, and shortly after made acquainted with the saving power of the Gospel. One of these became the wife of one of our ministers, Mr. David Waugh; the other was married to Mr. Condell, the steward of the circuit.

Lorenzo visited the principal places where we preached, and every where was owned of God in the salvation of sinners, many of whom will eternally bless God on his account. One testimony of the grace of God in him, was worthy of observation. I heard it from several persons who had heard and seen him, though far distant from each other, and must have resulted from his solemn appearance, and extraordinary earnestness to save souls. Their testimony was—"That they never saw any person who so much reminded them of the Lord Jesus." After his departure, he wrote to me thus from Bandon, Dec. 23, 1800—"Jesus is still precious to my soul. I still believe I did no wrong in coming from America; a tender clear conscience is what I want, and true peace of mind. When I pass from place to place, and take a view of mankind, how few are Christians in reality! I am apt to think judgments are at hand:—what will become of the present generation!

"The rising generation will, I trust, learn righteousness; but faithful labourers must first be raised up, who will go into lifeless assemblies, and cry aloud; these will wear out in the vineyard of the Lord." 10th January, 1801—"I am now in Dublin, after a passage of fifty-two hours sail from Kinsale, in which place I have rea-

son to believe good was done. The owner of the sloop was unwilling I should come in her, saying, ‘Where priests and preachers are, there are no good voyages.’ The wind had been contrary several days, till at length the captain, without the leave, and I suppose without the knowledge of the owners, consented to take me. People not in Society, unknown to me, paid my passage, procured me sea stores, and in two hours after I got knowledge of it, was on board, and under sail with a fair wind. Oh, the goodness of God to me, a stranger in a strange land! Surely God will never fail those who have a single eye to his glory. * * * This day J. D. treated me with more friendship than ever, but the kindness of M. Lanktree will not soon be forgotten by Lorenzo Dow, and I think he will not be forgotten by the Almighty. Though I strive to live daily as for eternity, yet I perceive my best works cannot bear the rigour of divine justice, but need the atoning blood. Oh, what could or would we do, were it not for the mediatorial office of Jesus, who is precious to my soul from day to day! I feel the want of more faith, and have a greater desire than ever for the salvation of souls—to be more god-like. When it is well with you remember me—and I thee.

“In my private sentiments, I conclude that some great event is about to take place in the earth. Oh, the destruction which I fear awaits the nations! Hypocrisy will be torn down more and more, and Christianity will shine forth in its primitive beauty, purity, and glory—gradually, and yet rapidly.

“Oh, my brother! be engaged much with God, and seek for a closer walk with him, and pray that he would roll on the travailing pains of Zion; and surely you will see good days on your circuit, *as I think*. Farewell, in the bonds of a peaceful Gospel!—L. D.”

Having mentioned the miseries brought on this country

by the rebellion, the heart-rending details of which were so frequently drawn forth in private conversation, I shall record the following, which were given me in writing. They will serve to explain the special grace and faithfulness of the Lord to those who call upon him in the day of trouble, however grievous or perplexing their sufferings :—

From Eliza, daughter of Edward Steacy, of Tomgarrow, County Wexford—" On the 27th of May, 1798, being Whitsunday, when my father and I were on the road going to divine service, to the village called Monamolin, being met by an officer and some privates, they told us that the rebels were up in great force, and committing dreadful depredations—burning and murdering the Protestants as they proceeded, particularly Mr. Buckley, an officer, and the Rev. Mr. Borrows,* near Oulart, with a number of loyalists, which had been collected for the defence of his family and property. We were also informed that George Greenly, of the Ballaghkeen cavalry, was mortally wounded by a musket ball, and that while his mother was supporting his head, there came a woman from the rebel party, and gave the dying man several stabs of a fork in the body, and that while his sister was endeavouring to administer some relief, she was instantly shot. Being informed of this, we returned homeward, beseeching the God of mercy to prepare us to meet whatever he should permit with Christian fortitude, or protect us from those merciless men ; and, blessed be his name, it was not in vain. In the evening of this memorable day, the king's army having marched from Wexford to Oulart-hill, where the rebels had assembled in great force, were overpowered by their numbers, and thus became a prey

* A respectable correspondent informed me, that this clergyman was shot in his own lawn, while walking arm in arm with the Priest.

to the rebel party, leaving nearly one hundred dead on the field of battle. Flushed by this victory, the rebels proceeded to murder the Protestant inhabitants of the country; and in a short time, my father's house, furniture, and provisions, were consumed. Words fail to describe the scene of terror which ensued. That night we were allowed to remain in a ditch convenient to our once comfortable habitation, and, blessed be the Lord, he was graciously pleased at intervals to afford us comfort and support. The next morning, the rebels took my brother Edward to Vinegar-hill, with eighteen other prisoners, in order to put them to death; those eighteen were all killed, but my brother obtained a respite, through the interference of one of their officers, and was afterwards delivered.

“ The next morning, a woman of the rebel party came to us, and said, ‘ Glory be to God, Enniscorthy is taken and burned, and your son George killed !’ On Thursday my sister and I made our way to Enniscorthy, to inquire after him, whether dead or alive; on our arrival, a woman caught hold of me in a violent manner, swearing she would destroy me, but desisted again, saying, ‘ We have not, as yet, begun to kill the women and children !’ It is impossible to paint the scene of horror that was presented to our view; the greatest part of the town lay in ruins, with the bodies of murdered Protestants in great numbers lying in the streets, some with their heads and arms off, and some devoured by swine! My brother was killed, and his house burned; but I in vain inquired for his dead body. With much difficulty, I found my sister Whitney and her three children, and three of my brother's. My sister was informed that her husband had been killed that morning. One of their Doctors being present, bid us kneel down and thank God for sending so many heretics to hell! They would not suffer my sister Whitney to come home with me, and deprived me of what bread

I had brought from home for my brother's children. One of them I carried eleven miles, and their cries for bread were sufficient to move the hardest heart. The fatigue of this journey, and being obliged to lie out in the ditches at night, brought on a violent pleurisy. On the 3d of June, one of the rebels commanded us to get ready and go to mass, and be re-baptized, or not one of us would be left alive; but not fearing those who can kill the body, we absolutely refused. June 5th—The rebels, four in number, took my father about a mile distant. They placed him on the brink of a marl pit, and asked, Could he swim? He replied in the negative. They gave him his choice, either to leap in or be shot. He said he would not be accessory to his own death—entreated they might take him to their own camp, try him according to their law, and if they found him worthy of death, he was willing to die. This they refused, saying, they would never try one of *his kind*. They then removed him to another place, and asked him what he believed? He answered, 'I believe in God who made heaven and earth.' They asked him, Did he believe the Virgin Mary to be blessed above all women? He replied, 'I do.' 'Why do you believe?' Answer, 'Because it is left on record, that all generations shall call me blessed.' They then cursed his soul for a vagabond, what did he know what was left on record. 'Here,' said one to his comrade, 'take this gun and shoot the rascal.' He to whom it was given, desired him to kneel down, he gave him a moment to commend his soul to God, and then fired. The ball went through his body. He threw himself on his face, and they departed, leaving him, as they supposed, dead. My mother, in distraction ran, and found him weltering in his gore, but finding that he was not dead, she helped him part of the way, until he sunk exhausted. When the tidings came to me that my father was shot, my sickness entirely left

me, and I ran to meet them who were conveying him home. We did not attempt to apply any medicine for a few days ; but finding a gleam of hope, we did what we could, and he recovered. For three weeks and three days, all our lives were held in suspense ; but, blessed be God, the Lord Jesus was precious to our souls, and the sting of death was gone. The day on which the rebels took away my father to put him to death, he left fourteen children behind him—eight of his own, and six grandchildren—without a second meal's meat. I leave you to realize, if possible, the state of our minds in that dread moment. As soon as our floods of tears subsided a little, we retired to prayer, where we poured out all our complaints into the bosom of our compassionate Redeemer, 'who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities ;' and, blessed be his name, he was pleased to afford us a hiding-place, until the season of *tyranny* was past."

Mrs. Carley, of Ballyregan, near Castlebridge, in the neighbourhood of Wexford, gave me the following melancholy account. At that time she had been a member of our Society above forty years. On Whitsunday, being informed of the rising of the rebels, and the dreadful destruction and dismay they were spreading around, her husband George Carley, and her three daughters, fled in a little yawl to Wexford ; and on the Wednesday night following, the rebels having taken Wexford, she and daughters rowed back about three miles to their own house : shortly after, her husband and brother returned by land, and were taken prisoners, but released again for a season. Her husband having strong presentiments of being killed, devoted himself to prayer and reading—her own mind being supported in an extraordinary manner, and preserved in a peaceful recollected waiting for the will of God. On Friday, three men came riding to their house, armed with two guns and a sword. These were

named Mahoney, Connors, and Thornton, their neighbours. On their approach, Mrs. Carley apprized her husband and children. When he came to the door, Mahoney shook him by the hand, and inquired for his son. He answered, that he was informed that he was killed. Mahoney replied, it was so much the better ; then seizing him by the breast, dragged him along a few perches from the house, and shot him through the skull, scattering his brains about the path ! Mrs. Carley had been on her knees when she heard the report of the musket, praying for their murderers. When they rode off, she was left alone to inter her husband's body, which she effected by digging a grave beside the spot where they killed him ; this was on the path-way leading to their house. She covered it with green sods : and here was her frequent seat in the day time, as she said, *for company*, knitting her stocking, and waiting for her own final release from earth. She showed me the spot, and the hat worn by her husband when he was killed, which was perforated by the balls.

William Morgan, a respectable and pious old man, of Claycastle, near Wexford, gave me a long written narrative of his sufferings and deliverance : a short extract will develope a few distressingly interesting scenes. After all the anxieties resulting from the dispersion of his family, and the failure of some Catholics, distant relatives, who had solemnly promised them protection in the trying hour ; whilst he was standing at his own gate, he observes—" I saw two detachments of the rebel cavalry meeting at my wife's brother's house, who made prisoners of the father and three sons, whom they marched forward ; they ordered me among the rest : from that moment, I placed no more confidence in the arm of flesh, but wholly resigned myself, with all I held dear, to the divine disposal. On the road to Wexford, where there were seven prisoners

of us, I believe I was the only person who paid no court to man. We frequently met parties of the rebels, who exulted over our seeming misfortune ; but their triumph always increased my joy. Even the sight of the body of a Protestant, whom they had barbarously murdered on the road before us, did not affect me with fear ; on the contrary, when we arrived at the strand opposite the town, I was constrained to break out into singing the underwritten verse, which strengthened me very much, both then, and through all my confinement :—

‘ Ah ! show me that happiest place—the place of thy people’s abode ;
Where saints in an ecstasy gaze, and hang on a crucified God.
Thy love for a sinner declare ; thy passion and death on the tree :
My spirit to Calvary bear, to suffer and triumph with thee !’

My spirit pleaded with God, that, as my great Redeemer was raised from the dead, after conquering death, hell, and the grave, so I might be raised from my corrupt state, and stand fully prepared to meet with godly resolution, and a hope full of immortality, either the death of a martyr, or a natural death, according to his blessed disposal. This state of mind prepared me to pass through the streets without being cast down by the triumphs of the multitudes who gloried over us as we were conducted to the jail. Here we were joined by Mr. Gurley, a class-leader, and Mr. A. Taylor, our circuit preacher, which proved a great blessing to me, as we frequently prayed together. One day a great number of drunken ruffians attempted to force through the guards and outward door, that they might despatch us all ; we urged Mr. Taylor to pray with us ; he declared his inability, from the agitated state of his mind ; but I never heard William Gurly pray with greater freedom. While we pleaded with God, he was graciously pleased to over-rule the minds of the enraged mob, who

spared us for that time. From the jail, they removed me, with several others, to a prison-ship, which lay at the quay, and was full of rebels, who treated us with great rudeness. Here I found a young man, a Mr. Meadows, who I observed retiring every morning and evening. We joined with some others, and went through the morning and evening service of the church, which was a blessing to me, as it gave an opportunity of worshipping my God; but we conducted the service with such a low voice, that the guards could not hear.

“ At length the *fatal* morning arrived, (June 20th.) We noticed unusual numbers of men and women passing over the bridge into town, most of whom would stop to gaze at us, longing to have us on shore : some of them ordering our guards to send us to them to be despatched. About twelve o'clock, we were ordered to be locked down. About two hours after, we heard frequent firing, which at first did not much alarm us, until we observed the guards looking intently at the bridge, and heard a tumultuous noise, then we perceived our danger, which was confirmed by one of the guards, a Protestant, who, getting a private opportunity, stooped down, and, with a weeping voice, requested us to fall on our knees, and prepare for eternity, as the rebels were butchering the Protestants on the bridge, and throwing them into the river. While bowed before God, I felt a greater measure of resignation than at any former time. The death of piking was shocking to my feeble nature. In order to reconcile myself to it, I went up the ladder, and looked out while four men were massacred, and thrown over. This was executed in the space of ten or a dozen minutes. When a victim came up, the rebels strove with each other to see who would first pierce him with a pike ; I suppose twenty would be thrust into him at one time ; then they forced the weltering body over the side of the bridge into the river, and shouldered

their pikes until another was urged forward to his fate. I hastened from the ladder, lest I should be accessary to my own death, and retired to a private corner to wait the event. I was determined to depend on God alone ; I besought him to prepare me for himself, and then take me as soon as he thought good. There were eight or ten men ordered out of the ship, three of whom suffered, the rest of them were saved.

“ When the massacre ceased, there was an awful silence, the rebels being ordered to Vinegar-Hill, to repulse the army that had appeared there. The next morning, whilst on my knees, I was agreeably surprised with the roaring of cannon. I was certain that the rebels were suffering a defeat. We were not without apprehension, notwithstanding, that if they were not very closely pursued, they would endeavour to finish the work of murder they had begun. In the evening we found the guards remarkably civil, allowing us to walk the deck. Still we heard the nearer approach of the cannon, whilst, with every shot, my poor heart would slap against my side with joy. We soon observed the rebels pouring into town in multitudes. This excited fresh alarm, until we at length perceived them straggling in small groups, and some returned as if undetermined what to do ; at length they rushed forward in multitudes, each man shifting for himself. At that happy moment, my heart was ready to burst with unaffected love to my God for his wonderful deliverance. It was my consolation and glory, that he alone had effected my salvation.”

Among those who obtained deliverance in that fearful crisis, was Mr. George Taylor, one of our local preachers from Ballycanew, with whom I was personally and intimately acquainted. He published a History of the Rebellion in the County Wexford. From the “ Account of his Captivity among the Rebels, and Merciful Deliverance,” I

have made the following extract, which, in connexion with Mr. Morgan's affecting statement, will be read with no ordinary interest.

After narrating numerous hardships which he endured, and deliverances from death which Providence had effected for him, Mr. Taylor proceeds to say—"On the 19th and 20th days of the month (June), I thought deliverance near, (notwithstanding, I heard that they were endeavouring to come and murder us in the night), so I pricked with a pin on the walls of my prison, on the door and window cases, 'salvation,'—and, 'salvation, O the joyful sound!' and every time I cast my eye upon it, it afforded me much consolation.

"On Wednesday evening, June 20th, we saw a great crowd of rebels coming up to the market-house: then, indeed, we all thought there was danger near, and every one made use of the last shift, namely, prayer. Fearing I should be taken for a military man, as in that case death was certain, I took the soldier's coat they gave me at Gorey, hid it under the straw, and putting on a surtout, which a friend lent me while in jail, I knelt down to pray to God for assistance. While thus engaged with the Lord, they came in, and took away for the slaughter fourteen of my fellow-prisoners. After they went out, we inquired of the guards what they were going to do with them? They told us, 'To try them.' Others said 'To take them to the camp.' They then came back and took ten more. While they were butchering these, a woman came in crying, and told us that they had taken several prisoners out of the jail, piked them on the bridge, and threw their bodies into the river; that they were now torturing those taken from among us, and that *we* were all to be murdered in like manner. Now, indeed, we saw what was before expected. I endeavoured to impress on their minds, the necessity of making good use of the little

time they had. I then prayed earnestly with them, and all seemed resigned to the will of God.

“I told the guards, that the blood of the innocent would cry to heaven’s eternal throne for vengeance, and that the Lord would surely scourge them with the rod of his wrath, and make them a monument of his vengeance, and a proverb to the generations unborn. They instantly withdrew. I believe a conviction of their guilt smote them.

“The executioners then came in and took out eighteen more! I being one of their number, a young man laid his hand on my shoulder, and desired me to come along with them; I obeyed; but before they took us out, I reasoned with them strongly on the inhumanity and wickedness of murdering harmless men, in cool blood, because they were not of their persuasion. It was to no purpose; we were led out, and marched to the bridge, two and two, guards before and behind, and on each side. On the way they were teasing us to bless ourselves. They would shout as we passed through the streets—‘Why don’t you say your prayers? Bless yourselves before the devil gets you! You will be in hell’s flames in a few minutes!’ One of them came to me, and asked me. ‘Can you bless yourself?’ I replied I could not; but I can pray to God to bless me, and you can do no more. Some of the prisoners asked for the clergyman, as they wished to see him before they died. The guards told him they should get him. I not thinking they meant the Priest, and recollecting there was an English clergyman in jail, a Mr. Wilson, and wishing to receive the sacrament, told them I would wish to have a minister also. Hereon several of them shouted, ‘Oh, boys! here is Taylor, the preacher, from Ballycanew, wants a minister.’ ‘Pike him—pike him, at any rate!’ was instantly the cry. They would hardly let me go to the bridge, they so thirsted for my blood. When we arrived there,

we kneeled down to commend our souls to God; they then piked six in the most horrid manner, and threw them over the bridge. One man, in his torture, jumped into the river, where they shot him. While these were torturing, there was only *one* between me and death, when the Lord appeared on our behalf, by sending Mr. Corrin, Parish Priest of Wexford, to rescue us. When he came to the place of execution, he exclaimed, ‘Oh! what is it you are doing? Desist from shedding innocent blood. There has been too much of that already. You have lost your cause, and, for God’s sake, shed no more.’ On which, these inhuman monsters exclaimed, ‘They are all bloody Orangemen! we will pike them, for this is the way they would serve us, if they had us in their power!’ Mr. Corrin then took off his hat, and entreated them to desist, but in vain. I thought he would not be able to prevail. When he saw their determination, he requested them to kneel down and pray for the souls of the poor prisoners, before they would kill any more of them. They obeyed; and when he had got them in the attitude of devotion, now said he, ‘Pray that the Lord Jesus may give you to feel that mercy for them, which you expect from him in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment!’ They at length consented to spare us a while longer. He then led us away; and as he was coming by me, I stood up and kissed his hand, saying, ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.’ On our return, we met that tyrannical rebel, Thomas Dixon, who anxiously desired to know why we were brought back. Mr. Corrin told him, he had begged us off for the present. Dixon was very much displeased with Mr. Corrin, and intimated that he would yet have satisfaction of us every man. When we were brought back, I wept from the fulness of my heart, and prayed for them, notwithstanding their thirsting for my blood. The Lord was my deliverer. * * * I passed a very restless night,

till the dawn of day, when, to my surprise, I felt the floor and foundation of the prison shake. Starting up to know what it could be, I heard the roaring of the cannon. I cannot describe the feelings of my soul when news came in that the rebels had retreated, and that the king's army were coming into town, and that the English colours were hoisted at the quay. I could not paint the transports of the people that were liberated. These were the most delightful scenes, and the most feeling I ever experienced. Young women were coming into prison, embracing their fathers, brothers, friends, and all weeping for joy! It could not but affect me. It appeared to be a time so solemn, so sacred, and acceptable in the sight of the Lord. About five in the evening, the army came in, opened our prison doors, and set us free. Now we tasted the sweets of freedom, and we gave them a hearty cheer, then went to the house of Mr. William Gurley, where a few of the most serious in town assembled, and sung—'I'll praise my Maker whilst I've breath,' &c. We then kneeled down, and returned thanks for our delivery," &c.

Time would fail to enumerate the instances of cruelty and destruction related to me by weeping widows, and mourning relatives, which, when once commenced, were almost invariably detailed to their tragic conclusion; and I feel it a pleasing transition to pass from representations of "battle, murder, and sudden death," with their horrid train of evils, written in characters of "lamentation, and mourning, and wo," to notice more particularly the manifestations of a merciful Providence and redeeming grace.

Often has my heart been deeply affected by pious John Webster's account of the manner in which himself and wife were delivered from merciless outlaws, after the rebellion. He took no active part with the loyalists or rebels; and supposing the worst was over, he quietly

cultivated his farm, suspecting no injury ;—at midnight, his house was assailed by a party of robbers, whose hands were recently imbrued in the blood of some of his neighbours. After breaking in the door, they entered, and immediately seizing him as he got out of bed, they tied his hands behind his back, and left him outside the door in care of a strong guard, who held him fast by the rope with which his hands were bound. They next proceeded to plunder the house. There appeared but a step between him and death, but his confidence was in God. In the critical moment, he felt as if supernatural energy had been imparted, and making a powerful effort, tore himself from his guards and clearly escaped. In a short time he saw his house in flames, and heard the piercing shrieks of his poor wife, who was now in the wicked hands of the incendiaries. He could only implore the interposition of Him who was Almighty to save. The wretches who held her, now began to quarrel among themselves ; she seized the advantage thus afforded her, and fled from them to a place of safety. Thus through the tender mercy of God were both preserved, to glorify his name in the land of the living.

Richard Leeson had also his house burned, but himself and wife escaped with their lives. They were a most exemplary couple, and lived in humble life, in the enjoyment of more solid comfort than the generality of Christians. They possessed abundance, while others were starving, and rejoiced to feed and relieve those who had recently been their worst enemies.

Joseph Erratt lived near the shore, on a rising ground convenient to Arklow. He was a most inoffensive man, with a large family ; lodged the preachers ; held the Quaker's principle of non-resistance, and committed himself to God. In the unsuspected midnight hour, the house of this good man was invested with armed ruffians, who

attempted to force in the street-door. Joseph started from his bed, and aware of the description of persons by whom he was visited, considered for a moment how he should act. The words of our Lord immediately crossed his mind, "If the good man of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would watch, and not suffer his house to be broken through:" these words determined him to keep them out if possible. He accordingly armed his servant-man with a pitch-fork, and left him to guard the door, whilst he availed himself of an old musket, without a lock, to secure the parlour. The fellows outside knowing his pacific views, did not calculate on this armed opposition, and seeing the servant man ready to receive them on his pitch-fork, and the barrel of Joseph's gun, which he kept presented near the window, they became intimidated, and shouted, "Joseph, will you shoot us if we go in?" "Try me!" was his laconic answer. While they parlied, Mrs. Erratt let down her little daughter from an end window, to run and apprize the neighbours of what was going on; she was observed by one of the gang, who pursued her violently. The child seeing her danger, ran down the declivity of the hill, the fellow still pursuing, until a stone or some other impediment stumbled him, when down he fell, and rolled on to the bottom: before he could recover himself, the child returned, and was taken up by her mother. The fellows fired several shots into the house, and some of them attempted to climb to the top and unroof it, swearing they would shoot Mrs. Erratt and the children; but although they were intent on accomplishing their wicked purpose, they could not accomplish it, for all at once they appeared panic struck, and unaccountably left the place. Their evil devices were confounded, and our pious friend was preserved to see good days, and a church of God in his house.

Another curious event I shall notice, which happened

near the place I last mentioned. As I was riding between Arklow and Gorey, I was overtaken by a fine young man in military apparel, who appeared to know who I was, and gave me such a history of his life as deeply impressed my mind, and interested me in his favour. He was brought up a Romanist, but felt attached to the Established Church, and often heard Methodist preaching, for which he was greatly persecuted. At the time of the rebellion he united himself with the loyal party, which exposed him still more to persecution and calumny. He said they imputed to him almost all the mischief done in the country. Shortly after this conversation, I preached in Kilbegnet, an insulated place near the shore. The congregation was small, on account of heavy rain which came on at the close of the evening and continued until after preaching—swelling a rivulet that crossed the road so very much, that those who came that way to preaching had to wait to a late hour, until the flood subsided to admit their return. This young man was one of those who were thus detained.

On that night a murder was committed many miles distant, of which it was said he was the perpetrator. A woman singled him out of “Ogle’s Blues,” and positively swore the murder against him at a court-martial held in Wexford; but his being at preaching that night, and afterwards so long detained, procured such evidence in his favour, as completely proved an *alibi*—which might otherwise have been extremely difficult—and procured for him an honourable acquittal. I was, myself, called to the court to give a character of the witnesses. The most remarkable circumstance in his case was, that on that evening he had no thought of attending preaching, but was going another way, when he was met by two young men who invited him to accompany them, which, when he refused, they took hold of him, and added force to per-

suasion. He was much affected by the deliverance wrought out for him, but how he improved it I cannot tell, having shortly after left the country.

In the course of this year we procured ground for the Wexford chapel, and built the walls. In various ways did the God of all grace work with us in gathering living stones to the spiritual building. Messrs. Thomas Kerr and George Mahon, who were then located on the circuit, were active and faithful, as they had opportunity, and rendered us essential service.

In order to extend the revival, we convened a general meeting of preachers, leaders, and principal friends, to take counsel how to act, and implore divine assistance; after which we published a day for fasting and prayer round the circuit; then held several extraordinary meetings in the most convenient places. We assisted each other in preaching a free, full, present salvation, through the blood of atonement, and called into requisition the talents not only of the leaders, but our old and faithful private members, requesting them to tell their experience in select meetings, to which those persons were invited who were earnestly seeking the Lord.

On the 21st of May, we held a meeting of this description in Ballycanew, which was greatly favoured. The unction of the Holy Spirit descended like the dew upon Mount Hermon. Amongst the fruit of this day's labour, was the Rev. Mr. Moss, a church clergyman. He heard with great interest the preaching and exhortation, then stayed for the after meeting. When a few devoted souls had spoken for their gracious pardoning God, declaring what he had done for their souls, to my great surprise, Mr. Moss stood up, and testified that he had on that occasion obtained peace and joy through believing. I had no further opportunity of acquaintance with that gentleman, but am rejoiced to find, from a printed

memoir of his life, which I have lately seen prefixed to a collection of hymns, that he lived and laboured an ornament to his profession, and died in the Lord. His friend, who drew up that account, could not tell at what time he became acquainted with experimental religion. I have now stated the fact, as witnessed by many on that occasion.*

Two or three classes in the neighbourhood of Hacketstown, which had separated from their brethren for a considerable time, and formed a little community among themselves, in order to partake of the Lord's Supper, because they could not enjoy it from their own preachers, quietly and graciously returned. The work of conversion and sanctification delightfully increased, and the year was crowned with the goodness of God. To Him be the everlasting praise !

A respected friend communicated the following intelligence of the growing prosperity of religion in the Cork and Bandon circuits :—" Blessed be God, I have now something worthy to communicate—worthy our mutual joy. I have to inform you of the vast extension of our Redeemer's kingdom in the South ; you have, no doubt, heard of the great revival in the North. The Society in the town of Bandon, which was but 70 in number two years ago, already amounts to about 270 members, and is increasing rapidly ; the flame has spread itself through all the Western circuit, so that it is little else than ' a nation born in a day.' This great work is particularly effected by prayer-meetings, to which God grants the indubitable seal of his approbation by converting many souls to himself. Of this we had several truly astonishing accounts, especially from brothers Howe and

* See Appendix, B.

Stuart, who accompanied Mr. Averell through most of that country, and set out from Cork, with a view of seeing for themselves, and forming an impartial judgment. I cannot recollect all the particulars, but the account, as read by Mr. Stuart at the French church on Sabbath evening last, exceeds any thing I ever heard. Poor and rich, profane and moral, the determined scoffer and the sober inquirer, Papist and Protestant, indiscriminately fall beneath the mighty power of God. From the time of their leaving Cork, to their return in about ten days, they were eye-witness to 170 souls being brought to the knowledge of God. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes! Some time previous to our having heard these accounts, the Society in Cork was particularly stirred up to seek a revival. Indeed, a revival in the hearts of believers had taken place—backsliders were daily restored, and the flame of Gospel love pervaded the community. We commenced holding prayer-meetings in all the chapels, after the evening service, and vast numbers crowded to each of them on those occasions. Our intention was to conclude our prayer-meetings at nine o'clock; for you must know that we, *master builders*, were *determined* to be very *prudent*; but, when the blessing was pronounced, behold, many remained prostrate on the ground, and by their strong cries and tears seemed determined not to leave the spot until God would show them mercy. Last Sabbath night, nine were set at liberty, and were not ashamed to witness to the glorious truth of justification by faith. It would have delighted you to hear with what artless simplicity some of them would tell of redeeming love, while joy sparkled in their eyes, and their faces were suffused with tears of gratitude. In short, every meeting is abundantly owned of God; our public band meeting is truly a little heaven. I cannot omit telling you, for I know it will give you pleasure, that I

am come from *behind the pillar* in the^d chapel, and have courage to stand in the front of the congregation."

May the Lord of Hosts send forth a seraph with a live coal from the altar of the sanctuary, to touch the lips of all our gifted brethren, who are now standing behind the pillar, beholding the glory returning to the church, and crying "Wo is me!" When the sin of their omissions is purged, the love of Christ will constrain them to stand forth, each for himself, and say, "Lord here am I; send me."

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Averell, gives such a delightful view of the work referred to by Mr. C. I shall lay it before the reader:—"Last Tuesday did I arrive at home, after witnessing the most glorious harvest in the church of God that I had ever beheld; yet it is but small in comparison of what I expect to see. After I left you for some time, my hands hung down, though in Ross it was a great comfort to me to see an old brother, who had for some time left us, turn back again.

* * * In Bandon, the footsteps of our Lord are glorious indeed! There is such a spirit of prayer, and striving to enter in at the strait gate *there*, that the Word of God is daily fulfilling amongst them; 'the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' Here about fifty persons were converted in three nights. Having been joined by brothers Howe and Stuart from Cork, with brothers Dinnen and Deery, we travelled through the West. At Bengour, our Lord gave us seventeen souls for our hire; in poor hardened Glendore, where they did not form a Society for twelve years, sixteen joined, and I sincerely trust good will be done there. In Baltimore seven souls were converted in one meeting. The same evening, in Mr. Evans', nine more witnessed salvation by faith; and in a small country place, next evening, fourteen. On the memorable 17th of March,

at Ballydehob, above sixty were brought to the knowledge of the truth, in one meeting.

“ Oh, brother ! never did any now living, I believe, see such a day as this in Ireland ! It seemed, in one sense, as the day of judgment, when the penitents were crying for mercy ; but it was surely the day of salvation—and that they proclaimed with all their powers, when God shone upon their souls. To show you how benign our visitation is in this quarter, when we came back to Dunmanway, we found thirty souls had been converted in the course of seven days at the prayer-meetings, and thirty new members were added to the Society. In Palace, county Limerick, at our quarter-day, seven souls were set at liberty. In Cloughjordan, on my way home, five were given to our prayers, and as many joined Society. In Mountrath, at our quarterly meeting, God blessed seven souls, and the whole house was filled with divine glory ; and in Abbeyleix, fifteen souls found the pardon of their sins. Oh, dear brother, help me to praise the Lord for his goodness ! Let us carry the torch of war against Satan’s kingdom wherever we go. God in Christ is visiting the earth in mercy, after the evils of rebellion and slaughter which it has seen. May he give you a great harvest ! ‘ Keep up discipline ; it is the life of our cause.’ ”

In this visitation of mercy, the province of Leinster, and particularly my native place, was not forgotten ; the work was carried on nearly by the same kind of agency ; the Society was enlarged, and many conversions took place. The power of the Holy Spirit was so remarkable, that my cousin Thomas wrote me word—“ It appeared like the day of Pentecost ;” and Mr. Averell, in another communication, mentions—“ I have been in Oldcastle, and witnessed a great work of God there ;” and adds—“ His glorious work is spreading in a wonderful degree and manner this year, above all the years we have ever seen.”

From the North I had the following account of the triumphs of the Gospel, from Mr. Ridgeway—"To comply with your request respecting giving an account of the revival which our common Lord has blessed us with in those parts, would afford me much satisfaction ; but, as so many were and are employed in it, both on this and two other circuits, I cannot relate the sixth part of it. The work of God among us broke out first at Newry. I went there, hoping to catch some of the holy fire, and saw eight converted the first night, and four the night following. Every week brought fresh accounts of the increase of the work in Newry, and we were all looking and longing for the flame to reach us. We agreed, therefore, to set apart a day for fasting and prayer, which was faithfully observed by all the neighbouring circuits. I invited Messrs. Hurley and Wood to come to our Christmas quarterly meetings in Armagh and Charlemont, and also the Tandragee preachers. None came but brothers Hurley and Crozier. Dec. 28.—In Armagh, the former preached a lively sermon, and with sacred awe we opened the love-feast. Not more than four persons had spoken their experience, before the holy influence, which appeared to rest on all present, burst forth on all hands. When the leaders saw a few souls converted, they were filled with zeal and holy boldness, and embarked with all their might in the common cause. Such a day Armagh probably never saw before. We had, on a moderate calculation, thirty conversions. The next day, being Sabbath, Mr. Crozier preached in the morning: he intended to go to his place after preaching ; but the power of the Lord rested on the congregation in such an extraordinary manner, that he could not depart. Nearly the whole day was spent in the preaching-house. In the evening we had it crowded with saints and sinners, and every thing seemed to fall before the power of the Word. We appeared at night as if worn

out with hard labour and fatigue; but 'the day was our own.' We concluded that not less than twenty souls had obtained mercy. On the 30th, we went to Charlemont, which had long been cold and formal; brother Hurley preached; and at the opening of the love-feast, before the bread was distributed, the congregation was affected in such a manner as I had not before witnessed. We had forty, at least, converted in three hours. The next day, we (four of us, preachers,) went to Newry together. We arrived there in time to commence the quarterly meeting. My dear brother, Thomas Brown, preached a powerful sermon, whilst the whole congregation presented a most affecting appearance. There was silent weeping, hearty amens, shouts of joy, and bursts of praise. The meeting continued until after twelve o'clock at night. We had twenty souls that day converted, the young converts joining with the great congregation to usher in the new year of 1800 with songs of holy joy and triumph. On that occasion, six preachers solemnly engaged, in the strength of grace, to spread the revival through the land. These were Wood, Hurley, Brown, Crozier, Sturgeon, and Ridgeway. Next morning before day, Messrs. Hurley, Brown, Crozier, and I, set off for Bluestone quarterly meeting, Tandragee circuit, where we met Gustavus Armstrong, John Malcomson, and A. Sturgeon; but none of us were able to preach, by reason of colds, fatigue, &c. Mr. Brown went into the pulpit, to try if he could address the people, but, through the mercy of the Lord, there was no need; for under the first prayer, the power of God fell on them in such an immediate and remarkable manner, that there was no time for a sermon. That day we had fifty converted. * * * All this time, the weather had been remarkably fine, or we could not have travelled as we did day and night, as if the Lord had withheld the storm until this great fire was kindled:

a weighty snow fell that night, so that we had hard travelling home next day. I parted from my dear Hurley with sorrow, and went to my place—fearing I should suffer loss when separated from my brethren; but my God was with me; the remembrance of which at this moment fills my heart with love, and my eyes with tears of gratitude! That night, on the side of a mountain, we had six converted, and three more next morning at family prayer. That night, and the next morning, within two miles of Armagh, we had a wonderful time, sixteen were converted; and from that time to this, the work goes on prosperously. It is not uncommon for us to have from one to ten converted in a night. We have got many new members; though the work has been considerably confined to our own people, who, through want of the life of God, have long been a clog to the wheels of our Gospel chariot. We have appointed several large meetings for the middle of the quarter, for the avowed purpose of reviving the work of God. We have held some already, which were much blessed for that purpose, on the Dungannon circuit, and one in Tandragee, the best my eyes ever beheld. We had not less than sixty converted to God on that day. The Irish missionaries have lately travelled through this country—Graham and Ousely: but two such men for an apostolic, fearless spirit, I never saw. Great success attends their ministry. In Fivemiletown, one hundred and fifty persons have joined the Society since they left it—prisons, and death, with which they are often threatened, seem no more to them than liberty and life. Brother Brown has had greater success than I, in this revival; in one meeting he was so filled with God, that he was overwhelmed, and his body sunk before the people. When lifted up, his first words were, ‘Lord, I cannot pray, but I can praise.’ I bless God, my own soul was never so well; I am often as happy as I can well contain. I fear

this labour will cost us the loss of some of the best of men ; most of them have been laid up with sickness, except brother Wood and myself. His great perspirations save him, the want of which hurts me. There is a revival in all the neighbouring circuits—Brookborough, Clones, Ballyconnell, Sligo, Enniskillen, Ballinamallard, Newtownstewart, Belfast, &c.

“ The work of conversion being so much confined to our own people, we have not so many mistakes in it, nor so many backslidings as might otherwise be expected. We may conclude, that so many among us getting heart religion, the holy fire will soon spread more extensively. This revival differs from any I have seen before in this respect, namely, few shrieks, loud cries, or faintings of the penitents ; but we have abundance of sighs, silent tears, and shaking of the body. This is the case in the three circuits above mentioned. Paper fails, but my heart is full.”

The same effectual working of God, in the salvation of our sinful land, was singularly witnessed on the Cavan circuit. During the Conference, 1800, the local preachers and lively class leaders were greatly blessed in their labours, and many sinners obtained mercy. “ We must confess,” says Mr. G. Brown, in writing to Dr. Coke, “ that the Lord has crowned the labours of the regular preachers in several circuits with very great success. Nevertheless, under his blessing, I cannot but attribute our late extraordinary revivals in the North to the Missionaries. They, Sir, have provoked us to jealousy, and made us ashamed to stand still, whilst they laboured with all their powers by day and by night. I have the pleasure of informing you that we added 226 to our number last year, and left 101 on trial ; 192 professed justification.”

In America, also, the Spirit was poured from on high,

and many thousands were gathered into Christ, among the Methodists, Presbyterians, and others, producing much unity amongst ministers and people of different denominations, who had faithfully engaged in the work of the Lord. Several hundreds have been reported as born of God in some of their wondrous assemblies. "Glory be to God," writes Stith Mead, "the North is giving up, and the South not keeping back; the sons of God are coming from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. Oh, may this be the ushering in of a glorious millenium! Suffer me to hail you across the Atlantic ocean, for Zion's prosperity. 'Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit. Let the inhabitants of the rock sing; let them shout from the tops of the mountains.'"

CHAPTER IX.

1801-2-3.

THE Conference of 1801 was to us a Gospel jubilee. Our labours, during the past year, had been crowned with astonishing success. "Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," succeeded those of "wasting and destruction;" our hearts glowed with gratitude to God "who giveth the increase," and were animated with renewed zeal to fulfil our high ministerial calling with fidelity.

When the first draught of our new stations was prepared, my name was connected with William Smith, for the Waterford circuit; until which time we had never been personally acquainted. During the interval allowed for

private consultation and arrangement, previous to the final confirmation of our appointments, he introduced himself to me with that affable, brotherly spirit, afterwards rendered familiar, and inquired how I approved of our labouring together, and of the circuit to which we had been designated by the Stationing Committee? I replied, that although I had heard distressing accounts of the state of the Waterford circuit, I would prefer going there with him, and endeavour to promote its prosperity, than incur the responsibility connected with entering on other men's labours where there had been a great ingathering. He proposed that we should retire into one of the class-rooms, and make it a matter of prayer; while we there called on the name of the Lord, we were favoured with such an immediate and abundant baptism of the Holy Spirit, as banished all hesitancy from our minds, and imparted a satisfying earnest of the future good, which God in his infinite love had prepared for us, and the people among whom we were going to labour.

Our circuit included the city of Waterford, which was a half-residence, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Tipperary, and Cashel, with a few places of minor importance. According to what had been reported, we found this interesting portion of our Lord's vineyard in a depressed and mourning condition—the reverse of that prosperity already noticed in other parts of the land. Unhappily, some of our predecessors, for more than one appointment, had rendered their ministry unprofitable to the people; hence we found many of them in heaviness, through manifold temptations, and some of our best friends were shy and reserved.

Through the tender mercy of our God, this state of things did not long continue. My amiable and excellent colleague soon became deservedly popular; he delighted in provoking his fellow-labourer to love and good works,

and glorified God for his success. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" What wisdom and goodness are manifest in the order of God! When our Lord sent forth his disciples "two and two" to bear his message of mercy to a miserable world—by mutual prayers and counsels—by united energies and influence, they fulfilled their ministry, "and preached every where, God working with them;" whilst by their fervent love, they exemplified before all men the genuine character of the religion of Jesus.

Shortly after we commenced our labours in Waterford, our congregations began to increase rapidly, and a quickening influence attended the preaching of the Word: cases of conviction and conversion were multiplied, new classes formed, private and public band-meetings established, delightful singing was introduced into the congregation, and two galleries added to the chapel. In Clonmel also, our ministry was greatly blessed. The Lancashire Volunteers, an English regiment, which was quartered there at the time, was powerfully influenced by the life-giving word, and "devout soldiers" became numerous. In Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary, the Gospel leaven spread considerably, and in most of the other places where we called, with the exception of Cashel. The spirit of life, love, and liberality, was richly poured upon our people. They were devising liberal things for their ministers, and for the general good:* they delighted in the

* Our general steward took a most affectionate and lively interest in the welfare and comfort of the preachers, and their families, besides paying all the deficiencies of the circuit from his private purse. On one occasion, after I had shown him my list of the pious poor in the different Societies, with a statement of their circumstances and wants, he sent me the following communication, which was repeated as often as there was necessity:—

"DEAR BROTHER—I send you five guineas to balance your little

services of the sanctuary, in praising God, and in mutual happy fellowship with each other ; and thus, like the early churches, "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they were multiplied."

Sept. 19, 1801—Mr. Smith and I travelled together to Roscrea, to meet Dr. Coke, who had called together an extraordinary convention of the district. The first night, we stopped in Clonmel, and preached to about three hundred persons ; at the love-feast which followed, the pious soldiers told their experience with great freedom and simplicity, and several of them joined Society.

On the 23d, we held our district meeting. Our English brethren not being able, as formerly, to pay our deficiencies, we were thrown on our own resources. We resolved on laying the subject generally before our friends, and thus make an effort to establish a book-room of our own. On our return, Mr. Smith entertained and edified me with an account of his Christian experience from the beginning. He is an astonishing instance of the "exceeding riches" of divine grace.

The Nativity of our Lord was celebrated in Waterford, with a glorious manifestation "of heaven upon the earth." At the early service, after the congregation had sung that cheering anthem, Luke ii—"There were shepherds abiding in the field," &c., Mr. Smith preached from the passage, and the unction of the Holy Spirit richly attended the word. I trust many will have dated their conversion to God from that hour ; there was great joy among our people.

March 14, 1802—We were favoured with the ministry of Mr. Averell, in the town of Clonmel. He preached

book, but request you will not insert my name, nor let the poor want without applying to your affectionate brother. * * *

from Rom. vi. 8. After sermon, he administered the Lord's Supper, in a very impressive and affecting manner ; the Holy Comforter revealed the things of Christ to our hearts, to whom, once more, I consecrated all my ransomed powers.

April 19—Mr. Smith wrote to me from the same place, as follows :—" My dearly beloved brother, though it is now past eleven o'clock at night, I cannot sleep till I inform you that I preached a farewell sermon to my precious soldiers to-night, from Joshua i. 6. A gracious time. Afterwards, the whole Society drank tea in the school-room. We turned it into a love-feast. But tongue cannot tell, or pen write, a description of the overwhelming power of saving grace which fell on the people. The oldest Methodist present never remembered such a time ; and I am sure I never saw any thing equal to it, nor ever expect to see such a night, till I stand before the throne. It will surely never be forgotten in Clonmel. Oh, praise him my brother ! Tell all the people to praise him ! My soul praise him ! Oh, for a thousand tongues to set forth his praise ! My heart is too full to say more, but I could not be quiet till I wrote—for I knew it would gladden your heart. The soldiers all send their best and lasting love to you. I am, dear brother, in the delightful service of the best of Masters, yours, W. S."

On the day following he thus addressed Mrs. Smith, on the same subject :—

" My very dear Peggy—I wrote last night to brother Lanktree, and desired him to read his letter to you. Having a few minutes to spare, I therefore write to inform you of our meeting this morning. At seven o'clock, I met the soldiers alone, and breakfasted with them at eight ; but I cannot describe the power of God which was among us : indeed, every place—every house—and every person, seemed filled with the presence and glory of God !

I have no words sufficient to express the felicity I have witnessed, and can only say, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' But he hath revealed them to us by his Spirit. My heart is expanded, and my eyes are overflowing with the love of God, so that I can hardly see to write. Oh, my love, praise God—praise him—tell the children to praise him. I was never so filled with God all my life. Live near to him, and be happier than ever. So wishes and prays, your ever affectionate husband, W. S."

May 11—We travelled together to Wexford, where I made over the chapel to trustees. Mr. M'Cormick, of Newross, accompanied us, and gave us his curious history. In the army he was a mighty man; and since he left it. When Ross was attacked by the rebels, he took a most efficient part in its defence. He armed himself, and slaughtered a vast number of the enemy; after which, being sick of his warfare, he joined the Quaker's Society for a short time. He seems now resolved to return to his brethren. Mr. Mayne received us with great courtesy and hospitality. We had a good love-feast. Mr. Smith and I both preached; and after accomplishing the end of our journey, returned in mercy.

At this season we had a visit from the Irish Missionaries, Graham and Ousely. I took my stand with them, on horseback, in the street of Clonmel. They were violently opposed by a rude mob, but they preached, notwithstanding, with fearless fidelity. The champions for sin procured a sort of mad person, and set him up to preach in derision, but he did little harm. Next day, however, they seemed determined for hostility, and at the time of preaching, advanced, blowing a horn to collect their forces. Some influential Quakers interfered and frustrated their design, by applying to the magistrate and

procuring his protection. On the third day, we again proceeded to the street on horseback. After preaching commenced, some impudent women began an attack, with bitter and wicked words, who were soon silenced by a powerful address from Mr. Ousely; the men next advanced, the most forward of whom stooped to procure stones or dirt, to throw in our faces, but received some smart chastisement from the soldiers, and were taken to prison. Another attack was made on them when leaving the town, but they received little injury. Through the goodness of God, their visit tended very much to promote the cause of truth in Clonmel. In Waterford also, both in public and private, their word was with power.

The duties of our circuit, and the state of my family, induced me to stay from the Conference, which commenced the 2d of July, 1802. By fasting and prayer, we endeavoured to meet our brethren at the throne of grace; we had strong consolation in public and private, and from the Conference we had the most gratifying intelligence. "The first good news I have to tell you," says Mr. Smith, "is, that there was not the smallest blame attached to any preacher in all the connexion. Every heart danced for joy—every eye filled! We all stood up, and sung—'Praise God,' &c. 'Holy, holy, holy, Hallelujah.' Our extra collection amounted to £1312 17s. 10d. Our numbers this year amount to 26,200—last year they were 24,623; being an increase of 1,577. The increase in America, 10,000!"

I was continued on the same circuit, in the pleasing yoke with Mr. Smith, another year. August 26, George Lester, of Carrick-on-Suir, a pious youth, died in the Lord, while I was there, leaving a good testimony to the grace of God; and Mr. S. wrote thus from Waterford—"I think I never had more power or clearness in preaching. Yesterday, at intercession, read Luke xv; then

gave out the Prodigal's hymn. While singing, the Spirit of wonder, love and joy, descended, especially at these words, our feelings could not be described—

‘Thou on my neck didst fall,
Thy kiss forgave me all:
Still the gracious words I hear,
Words that made the Saviour mine,
Haste, for him the robe prepare,
His be righteousness divine!’*

At our leader's meeting this morning, several said they never remembered such a time. Surely God approves of days of fasting and intercession.”

During my two years labour on this circuit, Mr. Smith and I regularly corresponded with each other, when about a week absent; a few extracts more from those letters will serve to show the spirit in which we lived and laboured; and their intrinsic worth will recommend them to the reader:—

“My dear brother—‘Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away.’ How much nearer to eternity hath it borne us both, even since we parted? Well, blessed be God, I can rejoice at this—but I rejoice with trembling. I think, what should I feel, when admitted among the spirits of just men made perfect—I am now ready to shrink back at the thought. We feel a diffidence when introduced to a place where there is a large company of genteel intelligent persons—on such an occasion we are apt to appear very mean in our own estimations. How much more were we to have an interview with the king? But, Oh, my brother, to be permitted to see God!—to see the various orders of angels—of his mighty angels! To see patriarchs, prophets, evangelists,

* See General Hymn Book, p. 187.

martyrs, and saints, out of every nation and people. To converse with them—to mingle our hallelujahs with theirs—to encircle the throne—the soul expanding all its powers by praise and adoration—the Triune God, pouring himself afresh into the soul, or darting upon it deeper and brighter rays of his matchless glory! My brother, I have views this moment of this blessed place, which I can never utter! * * * I have had happy seasons since I saw you. On Sabbath morning, I was so filled, that I thought I should not be able to preach. All present felt that God was there. You shall hear all on Monday, from yours," &c.

"My greatly beloved brother—I am just come from your family, and they are *all well*. My family are much as usual. I have paused, and raised my *swelling* heart to God, for these mercies to us both—pause you, and do the same.

"As to myself, I think I am becoming a more regular and orderly man than heretofore. I long to be like clock work—like the sun, moon, and stars—to be at the moment in every thing. But I find a struggle in doing it—a self-denial. Yet some things which were formerly hard, are now not only *easy*, but necessary to my happiness. I have had severe conflicts with Satan since I saw you; so severe as to attack the very foundation of my hopes. As a counterbalance for this, I have had great helps from God. Last Sabbath morning, while speaking from Luke xii. 32, he was present in a wonderful manner. Many could say, 'Did not our hearts burn within us?' I do not forget you in my prayers. I feel more than ever, my insufficiency for the work. I speak the naked truth—I feel the want of every qualification of a preacher—piety, wisdom, zeal, courage, *burning love for souls*, &c. Oh, may the Lord give us both a daily baptism of the Holy Spirit! Amen."

About this time, the Independent ministers visited Waterford. They were well received, had large congregations, and ultimately succeeded in fitting up a chapel, and forming a permanent establishment. Their success, however, did not affect our congregations. We endeavoured to maintain a good understanding with them, whilst we diligently attended to our own work. Messrs. Gunn, Kelly, Cooper and Hamilton, were among their first Missionaries. A letter which I received from Mr. Kelly previous to his coming, and one from my colleague after they had made their first entrance, will exhibit the Christian feeling which subsisted among us at that critical time :—

“ My dear Friend—On account of my absence from Ireland, I did not receive your letter until some weeks ago in Athy ; and I should have answered it before, but that I did not know how to direct to you. I now take the opportunity of Mr. Gunn’s going to Waterford, to send you a few lines expressive of my esteem and love.

“ I think I can say with truth, that I wish you ‘ God speed,’ as I believe you do me. Let each hold his respective opinions, if he be conscientiously persuaded of their truth, but let there be no abatement of love on this account. I really think I can esteem a person, who, sees things of inferior moment, somewhat differently from what I do, and who yet loves those who differ from him, if possible more than I do the person who loves those who exactly think with him. In the one case, the expression of love is equivocal, inasmuch as we are naturally disposed to love those whose taste and opinions naturally harmonize with our own. But, in the other, love of the brethren breaks forth in spite of natural prejudice ; and the heart expands to embrace all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

“ I lament that there should be any difference among

us ; but, I am convinced, that the best way is, for us all to do the most we can, in our respective spheres of action, for the Saviour ; and, without expecting open and public union, to join, as far as we can individually, and in this way to prevent, as far as possible, the mischief arising from party distinctions.

“ Mr. Gunn, who has a sincere esteem for you, will give you this. He goes to Waterford by a particular invitation. He has no intention of advancing controversial subjects. There is room enough for us all. I think I know you well enough, to be sure that you will do all, that in reason and conscience, you can do, to show the world that ‘ we are all one in Christ Jesus.’ To do any thing that would indicate a doubt, what modification of discipline you preferred, cannot be expected, and ought not to be desired.

“ Give my love to Mrs. Lanktree. Perhaps we may meet before long, as I mean, God willing, to visit Waterford in the course of spring or summer. The Lord be with your spirit ! Yours, in the bonds of Christian unity.—THOMAS KELLY.”

From Mr. Smith.

November 20th, 1802—“ Beloved brother, I rejoice that the time is come for me to address you in the usual way. I partake of your joy in being so near home. This morning early, I called to see your family. ALL ARE WELL ! Let your soul praise him to whom you committed them.

“ You are, no doubt, desirous to know how we and the strange preachers agreed ? Answer ; Very well. They came with the olive branch in their hand, and it would not have been Christian like for me to meet them with the sword. On Friday night, they put off their preaching till half-past eight, to accommodate us. Cooper

preached on Rev. xxii. 17, to about one thousand persons. Mr. Kelly preached on Saturday evening, on Acts xxviii. 22, in which he valiantly defended the 'sect every where spoken against;' which he said were the Methodists, or Swadlers, and answered all objections brought against them. Sabbath morning, all the preachers attended our house: I preached on John vi. 28, 29. At one, Mr. Kelly preached on 1 Tim. i. 15, to more than one thousand. We all dined together in Mr. Morrice's. They all attended again at our house, at six o'clock, whilst I preached on Acts xxvi. 28. House crowded. As soon as I had done, the congregation went in a body to the long room, where it was supposed two thousand persons were crowded together. Cooper played the orator surprisingly, from Heb. ii. 3, for one hour. Monday, we all breakfasted at Mr. M'Kee's: that evening Mr. Kelly preached at half-past five, on the new birth, to above a thousand; then all came from the long room to our house, where I preached on Matt. ix. 12. For Tuesday evening, they published preaching at six o'clock—I gave up the prayer-meeting for that night—Cooper preached from Isa. liii. 1, for one hour and a quarter, to near two thousand—all the preachers spent the evening at Mr. Morrice's, very agreeably. Early on Wednesday they departed. They have taken the old school-room in Lady-lane, which is to be fitted up with all expedition. Mr. Kelly expressed great disappointment at not seeing you."

According to opportunity, I acted in my place in the same spirit: thus, through the mercy of God, our minds were kept in peace, our people increased in their love to us and each other, and no cause of offence was given to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God.

In the month of December, our families were visited with affliction. Mr. Smith refers to its commencement

in the following letter. So kindly does our Lord prepare us for the painful dispensations which he sees approaching !

“My dear brother—My text last night was on the abundance of Paul’s revelations, and the ‘thorn in the flesh;’ which text may be considered as a history of the last week or ten days. We have had blessed seasons since you left us. Richard West obtained mercy at private prayer, on Saturday morning. The *text* on Sabbath morning, Isaiah xlix. 15, 16, which, while giving out, affected, I believe, all present. On Tuesday morning, while Mr. Hammet was praying, and uttering these words, ‘Lord, we are come out of our tents to gather manna;’ the manna did indeed descend. His heart was too full for utterance. After struggling with his blessed feelings for a while with some difficulty, he said, ‘Lord baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’ Instantly the flame ran through the congregation. Again his mouth was stopped, and for a while he felt,

‘The speechless awe, that dares not move,
And all the *silent* heaven of love.’

The manifestations of God’s love to him have been so great, that his bodily strength has failed, and he seemed scarcely capable of any thing, but weeping, trembling and rejoicing. Our talk at the leader’s meeting was more like a lively band-meeting than one for temporal matters. Brother William Chambers, has also had a private baptism.

“These are our revelations—our comforts—but we must also have our ‘thorn in the flesh.’ *Your* darling Matthew, has been, for several days, troubled with a stuffing in his chest, and a sore throat, the complaint so prevalent among young children; and his mother has

been much fatigued attending him, especially at night. But, *see the goodness of God*, I have been there this morning, and he has got a fine night, and is up, and got on my knee and played with me—there is no danger. *My* wife has been very indifferent, and is so still. My Bess has a violent cough, and, I apprehend, is taking the disorder," &c. (She died on the 27th of the following April.)

Shortly after this, my wife took seriously ill, and before her recovery, I was myself suddenly seized with symptoms resembling the late description of cholera. Our infant was also heavily afflicted at the same time. The best medical assistance was procured; our beloved friends were all attention, and God was gracious; but the result, as to the expectation of life, was doubtful. In this trying juncture, Mr. Smith called in as an angel of mercy. After sitting some time in solemn recollection, he poured out his soul in prayer, to Jesus the great Physician. We were filled with unspeakable joy in the will of God, being fully assured that he had accepted our prayer: in that hour the child grew better; shortly after, my dear wife recovered, as I did myself, but more slowly. Before I was quite convalescent, at the close of December, Mr. Smith came to me with the most gratifying intelligence, of the increasing prosperity of the work of God; indeed, every friend who called, had something new to tell on the same subject. Great was the love shown by our dear friends, during our illness; and I trust the Lord gave me a heart to feel from whom all proceeded. At the close of this year, its language was, after having read through the book of Exodus—"Perfect thy work *in* and *by* me, by thy Holy Spirit, as Bezaleel and Aholiab finished the work of the tabernacle, that I may fully agree with the heavenly pattern of thy beloved Son, bear thine own inspection, and be filled with thy glory for ever!" Amen.

Amidst so many causes of joy, we had also a few occasions of grief—very few, when the nature and extent of the revival we had witnessed are considered. There were some who, after beginning in the Spirit, were likely to end in the flesh; and one young man of promise, wrung our hearts by his great unfaithfulness. We had a most afflictive case, also, in Cashel, where our labours were rendered painfully unproductive.

In reviewing those years, it is curious and interesting to reflect on the various aspects which the established church presented to Methodism. We sometimes heard cheering accounts of the spirit of piety in her ministers, who were becoming zealous and useful in promoting her interests; a specimen of which, I shall give at the conclusion of this chapter. We heard them preach with great satisfaction; they had frequently the candour and courage to hear us preach; we were honoured with their Christian visits in our humble dwellings, and we hoped that the time of heavenly visitation was at hand, when we should each pursue his providential call, yet sweetly harmonize in the spirit of the Gospel. Again, we were perplexed by the blighting influence of predestinarian doctrines, and a haughty bigoted zeal for "*the church*," in the most exclusive sense; and not unfrequently we were the subjects of bitter persecution.

Archdeacon Fleury, Mr. Wesley's former antagonist, was now friendly; and we generally attended service in his church. He called to see me in my illness, invited me to the use of his library, and told me he was the tenth clergyman in lineal descent from his ancestors. Doctor Stokes was of an opposite mind. Having some reason to depart from Waterford, after a fifty years residence, he endeavoured, by his farewell sermon, which he preached in several churches, to crush Methodism for ever. I heard him, on the first of May, in St. Patrick's, where he laboured

to prove, from 2 Peter iii. 16, that “we wrested the Scriptures to our own destruction,” especially the writings of St. Paul. 1. By preaching “salvation by faith.” 2. In professing to have the “Spirit of God.” 3. In avowing “instantaneous conversion.” 4. In “extempore preaching.” 5. In discipline, by infringing on the “established order” of the church.

On the 15th, Mr. Smith replied, in our own chapel, to a very crowded audience, from Acts xxvi. 1, “Paul, thou art permitted to speak for thyself;” and, notwithstanding Dr. Stoke’s Samson-like effort, the pillars of Methodism stood firm, “*and we went on and increased*” still more in Waterford.

Another attack was made on us the last Sabbath I was in Clonmel, by the Rev. — Stephenson, who had frequently been breathing out the same language as the Doctor. This gentleman acknowledged our activity, but alleged that it was like the zeal of the Papists, and equally injurious to the church. Why this apparently concerted attempt, to injure us, was made at this time, is unaccountable, except from the spirit of envy; for, in both places, the churches were crowded through our instrumentality.

On the same day that Mr. Smith preached his defence of Methodism, a curious occurrence took place in St. Patrick’s, the church we usually attended, which he playfully mentions in his letter to me on that occasion. Mr. Fleury, the clergyman, being extremely fond of church music—a band used to attend the service. On that day it was deemed expedient to introduce the large drum, that nothing might be wanting to perfect the performance.

“Mary,” says Mr. Smith, “took your Arabella to St. Patrick’s at noon, but she bore her testimony against the music and drums. She wept with *surprise, and refused to stay* in the place where God was so dishonoured! Indeed that was not strange, for Mrs. R—— and Mrs.

S—— left it under the same sensations. So you see your Arabella was not singular in her notions.”

From the Rev. H—— C——, of K——, to the Clergyman mentioned in page 79 :—

“ My dear Friend in Christ Jesus,—You may remember I made you a promise of writing to you, which I am ashamed to have so long deferred. However, I have sufficient excuses to offer, if I thought them necessary ; I shall cut them short by saying it was not in my power. I rejoice to tell you the work of God is prospering here. Our friend, Peter Roe, is indefatigable, and the Lord blesses his labours abundantly. Oh that all the ministers of Jesus could show as many seals to their ministry ! And why, dear friend, could they not ? Why, for instance, should not you and I be able to say, see these are the children for whom I have travailed in birth, till they were born again ! Alas ! *because we do not travail with them* ; because we are at ease, though we know they must perish for ever unless born again. Yes, though I know very little of you and you of me, yet I may say the fault is ours—it cannot be in our God ! Where are our earnest entreaties ? Where our messages of love ? Where do we continue in earnest, fervent prayer, for our wandering sheep ? Where do we ‘ refuse to be comforted, because they are not ’ ? Where, or when, are we willing to spend and be spent in bringing lost souls to the fold of God ? If our heart condemn us, he is greater than our heart—he knows all things, and surely will condemn. Let us, then, be well assured it is easy to get the name of a good clergyman, and to be stigmatized with opprobrious names, but this does not make us true shepherds. No : Where are our lambs ? Where is the fruit of our ministry ? This is the *proof* question. For Jeremiah saith, if we had done as we ought, we surely would have turned

sinner from the evil of their ways. Let us not, however, be faint-hearted. We have great and precious promises for our encouragement. Let us not carelessly read them, but go to work boldly among our people, like giants refreshed with new wine. If we speak for God, 'and not for ourselves, we are sure of his help. As Mason says—'If the love of God urges us to work, the God of love will pay us our wages.' Why, then, are we cold? Why ashamed? Because it is for ourselves, and not for God, we are trying to work. Ah, my friend, let us see well to it that our eye be single! If we err here, all is wrong—the whole will be full of darkness. But though I feel cold myself, I trust, indeed I know, it is not the case with my other brother ministers. No; the fruit shows it. I hear nothing of you, but I hope you are like the good Fletcher, '*working to be forgotten*,' so that your God is remembered. No matter whether the instrument is admired or not, so it stand the test of the Master workman. My friend, let us humbly draw back from observation; let us walk wisely and quietly; then our light will shine with a pleasing lustre. I fear not to scribble to you what comes uppermost, as I know you will not be offended. But I must have done. I hope you are resolved to come to our meeting the first Wednesday in July. Try to come, and let us see, when there, whether we cannot provoke one another unto good works. Farewell! May the God of peace be with you and in you, and grant you in this world to know experimentally his truth and love, and in the world to come life everlasting!"

Our annual district meeting was held in Roscrea. I attended there, with Mr Smith. We also stayed a day at Mr. Averell's, Tentower, where we preached and held a love-feast, which was a season of extraordinary life and love. Mr. Smith then proceeded to Dublin, to attend Conference; I returned to attend to my charge, and wait the

disposal of a wise and gracious Providence in my next appointment.

After a few days, I was informed that I was to take charge of the Carlow circuit, having Joseph Morrison for my colleague. My heart was greatly affected at the thought of being separated from the people who were rendered so very dear to me in the bonds of the Gospel. Carlow had but little of the same spirit to recommend it; at all events, it was an extended travelling circuit, without any lodging, or convenience for a family.

At the first opportunity, I preached my final sermon in Waterford, from Acts xxi. 14, "The will of the Lord be done;" and having purchased a horse, I hastened to visit the principal places of my new circuit, and procure furnished lodgings in the city of Kilkenny, where we were advised to pitch our tent. On the 22nd July, we parted from our beloved friends, and arrived the same evening at the place of our destination.

CHAPTER X.

1803-4-5.

THE Carlow circuit presented a most formidable field of ministerial labour, embracing the principal towns in the Counties of Kilkenny and Carlow, with various places in the County of Tipperary.

We had a few excellent friends, and useful leaders, but the Societies were generally small, and widely scattered. In the town of Carlow, religion was not prospering. Our Society there was distracted, and much injured, by a few contentious persons and busybodies: the chapel was small

and out of repair. In the colliery, a division had taken place, on account of one of our brethren having become postmaster, and doing business on the Lord's day. An appeal being made to Conference on the subject, it was decided in favour of the post-office. Hence arose much bad feeling against the preachers, and Thomas Wilson, an excellent brother, withdrew from the Society. Here we had the principal body of our people, and a small chapel. We had another very humble chapel, in a country place, called Bonleagh, and good congregations, composed of the descendants of the pious, persecuted Palatines, who found a refuge in this country in the year 1709.* Our chapel in Kilkenny was in a backward part of the city—the Society not large, and the congregations fluctuating. In many parts of the country which we visited, the pious clergymen of the Establishment were exerting all their energies for the spread of the Gospel; in Kilkenny, the Rev. Peter Roe had many seals to his ministry, and we found the converted part of his congregation cordial friends, though not members of our Society.

But all the Church clergy were not of this description; hence, in many parishes, ignorance and immorality greatly abounded. The neglected and ignorant were either drawn or driven into the vortex of Popery which surrounded them, until in different places, particularly in the

* A clergyman resident among the Palatines in the County Limerick, informed a friend of mine, that the history of this people is involved in much obscurity. When they landed in Dublin, they first encamped in Phoenix Park. Government caused a square to be erected for their accommodation, which still retains the name of the *Palatine-square Royal Barracks*. He also remarked, that they were declining fast to Popery and barbarism, until visited by the Wesleyan Missionaries, whose labours were blessed to their reformation. At the present time, (1835) above three hundred Palatines are in our Society, in Ballingrane, Court Matrix, and Killasheen.

County of Tipperary, few Protestant families retained their integrity. In one small town, twenty families had gone over to Popery in the memory of my informant.

This year was remarkably portentous and calamitous. On my first coming to Kilkenny, the insurrection broke out in Dublin, and Lord Kilwarden was sacrificed. We had military law, and rumours of invasion. The winter, which commenced early, was remarkably severe; there was a great snow storm in the latter end of March, 1804; and on the 19th of June, a surprising gloom overspread the face of nature, as if a dismal night were setting in, or the clouds preparing to pour forth another deluge on our sinful world. We were also visited with a malignant fever, which swept off many careless sinners from the neighbourhood of the colliery. My own health was reduced by a violent rheumatic affection in my head, which proved a torturing thorn in the flesh; and my dear wife, after her confinement, was brought to the gates of death by a pleurisy. This occurred during my absence from home, but was greatly sanctified to our mutual advantage. We were laid under lasting obligations to Mr. Roe, who was most tenderly solicitous to minister to her comfort and recovery. It was said, that he offered up more earnest prayer for Mrs. Lanktree, than was ever known for any other person in the city of Kilkenny.

About the same time we were necessitated to exercise several acts of discipline, in the removal of disorderly members, which, though salutary, were exceedingly painful to my mind. But my heaviest trial was from the defects and levity of my colleague. I never met such lack of service from any brother. Blessed be God, who did not leave me comfortless under these distressing circumstances! His strength was made perfect in weakness, and his mercy multiplied in many particulars.

I was convinced that in the Lord alone was my help,

and therefore set myself, through his grace, to be much in prayer, in reading, meditation and exhortation : preaching early and late, and visiting from house to house. At our September quarterly meeting we had indications of a good work ; in Carlow, there was a general feeling of deep contrition before God, and a blessed revival of love. I met the leaders carefully every where, examining how they prospered in their own spiritual state—what methods they adopted for improving their own minds—whether they maintained family religion—how they met their classes, and conducted prayer-meetings—with sundry other matters of a similar description. This close work, I was thankful to observe, gave much satisfaction to themselves, and the good effects soon became apparent.

In the month of October, I visited Clonmel and Cork, and rejoiced in the evidence afforded of the increasing prosperity of these Societies. In the latter, I was informed of the late demise of Mrs. Hoskins, who, after many years acquaintance with God, followed her departed husband in triumph to glory. Mrs. Bateman died suddenly while I was there. She was a native of America, and of a heavenly temper. Mr. Howe, in whose class she met only a week before her death, said, that her peace flowed like a river. Happy saint ! She is now at the fountain-head of bliss.

I returned from this journey much strengthened for my arduous work. Mr. John Howe assisted at our December quarterly meetings, where we had much of the divine presence and blessing. The year 1803 closed with grateful acknowledgments for innumerable mercies of a public and private nature, and humiliation for the impenitence of sinners. The blindness of the people seemed to increase, and their impenitence to bid defiance to the avenging arm of Omnipotence.

Amidst many evident tokens of the Lord's goodness to

us, he was pleased, most seasonably, to prepare and endow a promising local preacher, Mr. John Joyce, of Moneybeg, or Bagnelstown. He was a young man of good report, generous, devoted to God, and well gifted for public speaking. His labours in the Gospel were much blessed. He prepared a large room also in his own house, with a neat pulpit, for the accommodation of an increasing congregation and a prosperous Society.

Mr. Averell came to our help, and visited the principal places in the circuit. I returned with him to Tentower, his own residence; preached in Abbeyleix, &c. and invited Mr. Howé to our circuit, whose ministry left a gracious impression on the minds of our people.

With the return of spring, the indications of a revival became general. My own soul felt the sacred flame, and longed to see it prevail over every opposition. I was afflicted to see it retarded from a quarter already referred to, but still, light and life were increasingly felt among our old Societies. We formed several new ones, and our congregations were refreshed with frequent visitations of mercy.

Respecting two of these new Societies, I shall state a few particulars. One of these was gathered into the fold of the good Shepherd, in a village called Littleton, amidst great opposition. Mr. Grady was, temporally, lord and master of the place—being landlord, magistrate, captain and clergyman. He determined that there should be no Methodist preaching in his town, and threatened Mr. Colclough with the consequences, if he persisted to suffer me to preach in his house. His son, the Rev. Standish Grady, preached against us most violently; but persecution only served to unite the little Society closer to Christ and each other, and the preaching was continued. Hearing of Mr. Grady's threats, I wrote a remonstrance, and sent it to him, with a copy of "Alexander's Reasons for

Methodism." Mr. Colclough, when bringing it to Captain Grady, saw a yeoman going to his house, to whom he committed the packet. Although the poor fellow knew nothing of its contents, the Captain ordered him into the guard-house, tore the letter and pamphlet, cast them into the fire, and threatened terrible things against me when I should return.

I was informed that he went to the Archbishop of Cashel, to lay his complaint before him, and inquire how to proceed, who reprimanded him for his conduct, and sent him home, I would hope, in a better spirit. After I left the circuit, he met Colclough, and inquired what had become of Lanktree. When he informed him where I was, "Tell him," said Mr. Grady, "that I send him my blessing."

Another small Society was raised in a mountain called Augherone, near Leighlin-bridge, under the following circumstances.

Being directed to ride across that mountain to shorten my journey, my horse got swamped, so that I could not extricate him without assistance. After waiting some time, I saw an old man, named Condel, who kindly helped to extricate my horse, and conducted me across the mountain. This brought us within view of a group of houses where he said he had his residence: perceiving that he was not unconcerned respecting his eternal interests, I proposed to preach in his village on my return, provided he would endeavour to raise a congregation. He said, he expected I would have a good reception there, for their clergyman (the church minister) had been lately to visit them, and had particularly inquired, "whether those *good men*, the Methodist preachers, had been there," which left a favourable impression on their minds. When I called, they received me with gladness. A class was shortly after formed, and several of them converted to God.

Shortly after, the clergyman paid them another visit. They told him how the "*good men*" had come and preached; that they received the word, were formed into a Society, and doing well. At part of this information he was disappointed, and said they had now gone too far, by becoming a Society; that he must come himself, and hold meetings at the hour they were accustomed to meet in class. He did not, however, make a commencement during my time. The best of all was, that my old friend, Condell, obtained mercy, ripened for heaven, and God took him, leaving a few of his near relatives following him to Mount Zion.

The death of Eliza Thorpe, of Belbow, near the same place, which occurred about this time, was most affecting and eventful in its results. She and her brother William were members of our Society, which met at Mrs. Treacy's, Belmont. They were part of a large family, which rather opposed than encouraged their attendance on our meetings. At our June quarterly love-feast at the colliery, they were both with us. Eliza was very much blessed, and expressed her happiness in God with freedom. On their return, in company with Mrs. Treacy's son and daughter, the young women rode part of the way on the same horse. The animal ran off, and Miss Thorpe was thrown and killed. When informed of the event, I was as a man confounded before the Lord. I feared that the family would charge it upon Methodism. But God's thoughts are not ours: they received it as a correction from his unerring hand. Being requested by her father to preach her funeral sermon, the message revived my hope; and, on visiting the house of mourning, the conduct of her sorrowing parents strengthened my confidence. Her mother said that she was prepared for what had occurred by a premonitory dream. She thought she saw her carried home dead, lying on a door, which

was suddenly and exactly fulfilled. When the corpse was carried in, she exclaimed, in the spirit and language of Job—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" This was my text at the funeral, which was singularly coincident, as I had not heard of her expressions until afterwards. I addressed a vast assembly on that solemn occasion, which appeared greatly moved and affected by the word. It was an interesting era in the history of that family, having opened an effectual door among them for the reception of the Gospel.

I attended the ensuing Conference with a mixture of distressing and pleasurable feelings. I could not say, when the examination of characters came forward, that I had *no objection* to my colleague. I spoke on the subject with caution, and from a sense of duty, but it pained my mind exceedingly, though I think he was treated with lenity—the affair ending in his receiving a solemn reproof and admonition from Dr. Coke, our President. Our public affairs, too, were sufficiently trying; our funds low, and demands numerous; several preachers were in suffering circumstances, and we had a defalcation in our numbers. This state of things necessarily induced a heart-searching scrutiny into the causes of our declension. It was a season of deep and general humiliation before the Lord our God, who was, indeed, most graciously present, to comfort and encourage his servants. The reception of seven young men into our ministry, who had filled up their probationary years, was a season of extraordinary interest to a crowded auditory, as well as to the body of the preachers, who greatly renewed their strength on that occasion. Another circumstance afforded us renewed encouragement. Never before had so many candidates for our ministry been brought forward in one year, and placed on our reserve list, prepared for a call to the regular work. Among

these was John Joyce, whom I had the honour of presenting to the district meeting. He was immediately appointed to take a circuit.

I returned to my former department of labour with Mr. Rogers for a colleague, who served with me as a son in the Gospel, and a faithful fruitful fellow-labourer. We entered on our work heartily, and we had, indeed, to endure toils and encounter difficulties not a few; but having obtained mercy, we fainted not.

The peculiar relation of Methodism to the Established Church, made it extremely difficult to know how to act, so as to bear our fearless testimony against error, and, at the same time, cherish a spirit of peace and good-will towards those zealous ministers who not only went not with us, but frequently appeared to direct their labours to the counteraction of the good we were endeavouring to accomplish, when they could not wholly engross it to themselves. From the influence of our ministry on the Protestant population, and our frequent attendance on church ordinances, we were constantly under their eye, provoking them to jealousy, to opposition, or, perhaps, "to love and good works."

A few of the associated clergy of Kilkenny loved us for the Master's sake. We met them at the social party, and joined with them at their prayer-meetings, but they seldom attended our preaching. The Rev. Hans Caulfield, of Kilmannah, was an exception. I often called at his house; and in September he attended our quarterly love-feast in Bonleagh, among the Palatines, and at the close delivered an edifying exhortation. I feel pleasure in adverting also to the following sentiment in a note from the Rev. Peter Roe, inviting Mr. Rogers and me to breakfast, as an evidence of his Christian feeling, exemplified during my stay on the circuit, and, I trust, reciprocated by us.

He observed—"I feel concerned that I have seen both

of you so little. I trust we are embarked in the same cause, and I do feel more than ever the necessity of the most strenuous co-operation amongst all those who are desirous to preach the pure Gospel of God our Saviour. May we strengthen each other's hands, bear each other's burdens, be kindly affectionate one to another, and afford, to the world's conviction and our own comfort, this proof of our sincerity, and this fruit of the Spirit !”

This was as it ought to be. Let this principle of faithful love be cherished and vigorously carried out into all its practical results, and we shall be more than conquerors over the world, the flesh, and the devil—over infidelity, antichrist, and sectarianism, “through him that loved us.”

In the beginning of October, I paid a visit to my native place, where I had the gratification of meeting Mr. Joyce. We visited, prayed, and preached together. I found the Society greatly increased; saw my cousin, George Lanktree, and his son Henry, both in a consumption, but ripening for heaven. After a delightful opportunity among my relations and Christian friends, especially Mr. and Mrs. Henry, I forced myself from them—no easy matter, particularly from my dear mother; and after one of the happiest journeys I ever made, returned in mercy, accompanied by Mr. Joyce.

We were now visited by the Irish Missionaries, Graham and Ousley. Their preaching in the colliery was attended with the power of God; prejudice and opposition were borne down by the influence of truth and love. In Carlow, whilst they preached in the street and chapel, the word of life was blessedly triumphant. After I had read and explained the rules of our Society, and invited those who were convinced of sin to meet on trial, twenty persons gave in their names for that purpose. In Kilkenny, where the Missionaries were formerly ill treated, they were now honoured.

The first person who attempted disturbance, was ordered into confinement, by Mr. Edmunds, the mayor. The pious clergy and church people magnified the grace of God in his servants, who preached in public and private, enjoying the most ample protection, whilst "the word of the Lord had free course, and was glorified." After their departure, a vestry meeting was held in St. Mary's Church, where a vote of thanks was voted to the mayor, which was afterwards published in the newspapers, for his manly and Christian conduct on that occasion.

On the 25th of November, I was met in Carlow by Messrs. Averell and Joyce, full of zeal and love. I preached in the street, and they addressed as many as crowded into the chapel, which was become quite too small for the congregation. Several persons joined the Society. We proposed a subscription, for the purpose of building a gallery, and repairing the chapel, which was liberally attended to, and the gallery built in the course of a month. On the 22d of December, the chapel was crowded, and our love-feast greatly favoured. Several of our new members witnessed a good confession for Christ. We had now eighty-eight members in the Society. Who would have expected this but a few months since! It was the Lord's doing. To him be all the praise!

Mr. Rogers and I closed the year together in the colliery, and commenced the new-year by prayer and praise, and with renewed consecration of ourselves to the Lord Jesus and his service. With regard to myself, whilst I was deeply humbled before my Maker, I saw cause of infinite gratitude for personal and family mercies—recovery from dangerous sickness, merciful support, and deliverances—for the amazing forbearance of the Lord with our guilty land, amidst surrounding and impending judgments, but chiefly for the work of grace which was so happily extending over the circuit.

On the 20th of February, we deemed it our bounden duty to give a public expression to our grateful sense of the goodness of God, and accordingly devoted this day to praise and thanksgiving. Mr. Rogers met me for that purpose in Moneybeg. It was a delightful time in public and private, while we ascribed the glory to him who had so exceedingly blessed our labours and gathered so many precious souls into the fold of our Redeemer. There was one circumstance which tended to make this day memorable. Whilst I was visiting our aged brother Conners, on his death-bed, I found him as the shock of corn, ripe for the sickle, rejoicing in hope of his speedy admittance to glory. I found it to be as the antichamber of heaven, and enjoyed on the occasion a measure of felicity not to be described. On the 22nd, I preached his funeral sermon, to a weeping audience, from that most appropriate Scripture, 1 Cor. xv. 57, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."


The circuit now became so extended as to require a third preacher, and Johnson Brothers was sent to assist us until Conference. Having preached a few times in Castledermot, County Kildare, the man who received us had some of his property burned. After that, a threatening notice was posted up, that if we continued coming there we should be all destroyed. We persevered, however, and were mercifully preserved from harm.

During the month of May, we established Sabbath-schools in five places of the circuit, and distributed a considerable number of Bibles among our people. We had another visit from the Missionaries, when several more members were added to the Carlow Society. We endeavoured to crush the last remains of strife and contention in the old members. One of them, indeed, proved incorrigible; respecting whom I had the following note from

Mr. Joyce, a few days after. May the account he gives, prove a warning to others not to be found fighting against God !

“ Yesterday I was in Carlow. Mrs. — was one of the most horrid spectacles I ever saw ; she has been out of her reason for a week past. Mr. O—— went to see her, and it had such an effect on him as to deprive him of sleep the following night. He advised me not to go, but my heart is not so easily affected. I went, and she resembled any idea I could have pictured to myself of a fury, or an incarnate devil. She yelled in such a manner as to make my flesh creep, and the hair stand on my head. Her mother attempted to settle the pillow under her head, and by the rage which was depicted in her countenance, I concluded she would have torn her in pieces, had she not been confined by a strait waistcoat. Well, thought I, if hell be inhabited by such wretches, it would prove torment, indeed, to be confined with them for ever.”

Having settled Gurteen and Garrahill preaching-houses on trustees, and adjusted other affairs relative to the circuit, we prepared to leave our dear people and go to Conference. They were so tenderly affected, it was hard to leave them. The Lord lifted up his countenance, and filled us with his presence. One hundred and fifty members were added to our Societies, and many of them savingly converted to the Lord. The last note in my journal, respecting that circuit, is—“ I cannot look back without feelings of admiration, respecting the leadings of Providence which I have witnessed the two last years. I have laboured and suffered a little, and I trust have gained some increase of wisdom and experience. May I lean on *thine arm alone*, through all my future allotments !”



CHAPTER XI.

1805-6.

I ATTENDED the Conference this year, and enjoyed abundant happiness. There was a solemn sense of the presence of God constantly pervading the assembly, and great grace and peace among the brethren. The president, Dr. Coke, was filled with divine wisdom for his important office. A subscription being called for, to meet the necessities of our public work, no other expedient being found; the noble generosity of the preachers was most cheering; some contributing from their private property, and many out of their *penury*, to the amount of £604.

My appointment was to the Longford circuit, with my contemporary, John Clegg, a kind-hearted brother, and good preacher. It was a long remove, and my family in a tender state; but we were commended most affectionately to the providence of God by our dear friends in Kilkenny; and, confiding in his goodness, we set out on the 23d of July in a private conveyance; lodged the first night at Mr. Averell's, then proceeded as we could through Mountrath, Tullamore, and Moat, reaching the little town of Kenab on the evening of the 26th. This was the first place I knew of belonging to the Longford circuit. And here our gracious preserver saved my family from being ruined by a most alarming accident. It is necessary to remark, that our little travelling company consisted of my wife, three children, a servant maid, and Thomas Bustard, a pious young man who accompanied us, when we arrived in Kenab. I left the family in charge of Thomas, and walked forward to make some

inquiries. The mare appearing thirsty, he led her to a running stream, the family being all on the car, and then loosened the bridle to enable her to drink freely. She instantly took fright, broke from him, and dashing through a gap, made way into an adjoining turf yard, plunging most violently. I ran back imploring the Lord to interpose. They were all disposed of in a moment. My poor wife had leaped off with little Matthew; the maid on the other side, was flung away with the infant, Henry, in her arms; Arabella was left on the car, but the opposite wheel being drawn over a log of wood, the dear child was dropped on some soft turf mould, and thus were all preserved unhurt! The mare ran forward, until she broke the car and harness against a house, wounded herself, and then stopped at the door. How striking and merciful was this deliverance! Surely the Lord giveth his angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways! It was no small addition to our comfort that we were conducted to the door of a dear friend and brother, Mr. Hilliard, who, with his wife and family, embraced us with Christian cordiality. It is remarkable, too, that Mrs. Hilliard had been confined to bed with some rheumatic complaint at the time the accident occurred; but, hearing suddenly of our danger, it was affrighted from her, and she ran to minister to our comfort.

Having remained here, and in Mosstown, the hospitable mansion of Alexander Kingston, Esq. a few days, we proceeded to Longford, where we had a most inconvenient and expensive lodging. Here we had a small chapel, gloomy and retired; a miserable one in Mullingar, a small one in Kenab, and another in Killashee. The congregations were generally good, and so were our accommodations.

The length and breadth of our circuit included Newtonforbes, St. Johnstoun, Granard, Mullingar, Edgeworths-

town, Cool, Killashee, Kenab, and various country places; some of them of considerable importance: and through the whole of it, we endeavoured to extend our labours. With the help of a few judicious leaders and local preachers, we had valuable facilities for doing good; but, with the exception of an increase in our congregation, some happy deaths and lively love-feasts, nothing extraordinary appeared until the spring of the year. Through the divine blessing our public and private instructions, in a preparatory way, were made useful. A number of Sabbath-schools were formed, meetings for the Scriptural instruction of children established, Bibles distributed, and social and select meetings for mutual edification revived.

I was privileged with several gratifying opportunities of visiting Oldcastle, and preaching to my relations and friends. On our own circuit, which was noted for hospitality, we were favoured with visits from a considerable number of valuable Christian friends and brethren, among whom were Messrs. Averell, Ffrench, M'Cord, Harpur, and Deery—William Henry, Esq., and his amiable lady. Happy friendship! delightful intercourse! Oh, why should it ever be intermitted or weakened!

The letters I received from absent friends were peculiarly interesting. Extracts from a few of them I shall subjoin.

The following is from Mr. Ousley.

“ Since we have been with you, we have been through the Drogheda circuit. The blessing of the Lord appeared to accompany his word, and his kind providence to open our way as we went along. We preached constantly both in streets and houses; we have had large congregations, and great multitudes of Romanists, who appeared to hear with much attention. The Priests in Drogheda do not say a

word against us. On the market-day, we preached in three different parts of the market to attentive multitudes ; and in the evening, in the Tholsel ; besides, to a congregation of beggars one sermon, the morning we left it. I lectured from Dives and Lazarus, and spoke much Irish. The beggars were next us, and a vast crowd outside, curious to hear what we had to say to them. Surely the presence of the Lord was manifest ! Such showers of tears had not been shed in any of the other meetings. Those outside did not miss their own portion.

“ After preaching, we made the beggars pass by us one by one into the Tholsel, and gave each a halfpenny or penny ; but when about one hundred of them were in, one raised a whisper among the rest, ‘ that surely they were now caught, and we only did this to entrap them, and send them on board a ship then in the harbour, for channel row.’ Such an uneasiness as then prevailed among them ! The children began to squall, the men to bustle, and the women to have the heart-beat, all wanting to get out ; but our people would not let them until all would be in ; this terrified them more and more, until, at length, all were served that came : they were then let go, to their great comfort ! They gave us many blessings, poor things ! * * * The Lord is greatly blessing our little efforts on this (the Carlow) circuit. Lorenzo was with us these three days. We had a great meeting in the colliery on Sunday last. Some came to it from the distance of seven, ten, and twenty miles. Mr. Averell and Lorenzo preached, and we exhorted. Souls were born of God ; how many I cannot tell. Not less than two hundred persons have come forward to join Society on trial, within this fortnight. We preached in that savage, ungodly Kilkenny, three days successively—Lorenzo twice a day in the house, well crowded ; we preached

seven sermons in the street, and, for the first time, I laid siege to Popery every day. Our friends still dreaded this—at length their fears came upon them; but then, when all was over, they saw their fears were childish. The army, mayor, &c. &c. were on our side, so that, in a manner, we were enabled to get on quietly; for there were, at times, such shouting and noise, that you might suppose the whole city was moved. They sent an anonymous letter to the mayor, saying they would pull down his house, if he did not put us out of the town; but he laughed at their threats. * * Yesterday, we had our quarterly meeting in Carlow. Mr. Hamilton and Lorenzo were there a day or two before. We had a most glorious time. The members had scarce room. Even the gallery was occupied. Many hearts were rent, and some made happy. Above eighty came in one boat from Moneybeg side, and did not leave this until after nine last night. Truly this circuit seems to lift up its head. Many would be glad to see *you* here again.”

From the Rev. Hans Caulfield; dated Kilmanagh, Feb. 19, 1806, with a liberal order for Bibles.

“My dear Friend—I never was a regular correspondent, nor, I fear, never will be. I do not feel answering a Christian friend's letters like a debt, but esteem it a more remote kind of conversation, which I delight in, when time and opportunity permit. I hope, however, my delay in sending the order, will not be any hindrance to your most useful system of catechising and instructing. When I say catechising, I only mean, endeavouring to make the grown children understand the Scriptures as they read them.

Preaching may be more gratifying to *self*, making the

preacher an object of notice, and may be, and, blessed be God, often is graciously useful ; but teaching poor stupid, and, perhaps, thankless children is, though not at all pleasing to *self*, doing good for generations to come.

“Did you know any thing of a Mr. George Alcock in Kilkenny, a brother of Dr. A——. He is a medical man also : and when last in Kilkenny, was as full of Galvanism and Infidelity as he could hold ? Now, I understand, he is a monument of converting grace ; and, like Paul, in his own sphere, ‘preaching the faith he once destroyed.’ Oh, how reviving to see that the Lord’s hand is not shortened—that still he is the Saviour ! My faith is so weak, that I rejoice in seeing or hearing these instances of mercy, for they force me into a more believing way of preaching the truth. * * *

“ I am sorry to find they have dubbed our little association Calvinistic. It is not a pleasing cross to me, (for I am concluded one also) but truth must not be sold for any thing ; though, unless believing in justification and final acceptance, *solely* through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, (works being the proof) make a man a Calvinist, I might disclaim the title. But I remark, my dear Mr. L., that *it is not the real sound converted Christians, either among Methodists or Calvinists, that make most about these deep points.* It reminds me of the difference between the real brave officer and the vain talker. The one is engaged about dress, etiquette, uniforms, &c., while the other is minding the necessary things for war and defence. Still, however, truth is not to be slighted. My little flock are going on tolerably. Maurice Fitzgerald and Samuel Cole stand fast. The Lord keep them !

“ I am, in Christian love, yours most truly,

“ H. C.”

The following communication is from the Rev. B. Caldwell, Presbyterian Minister, Sligo, who is now with God. He mourned over the depressed state of religion, and proposed a remedy.

“ My dear Brother—Though I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, I am, nevertheless, encouraged by a worthy friend to write to you without reserve or apology. And, indeed, this task becomes still more pleasing to me, as there are so few of my clerical brethren with whom I can correspond : nay, I may truly say there is none to whom I could impart the secrets of my mind. I have been often tempted to think that I stood alone ; and though this may be true in a relative sense, yet I can say that I am not alone, ‘ for the Father is with me.’ Glory to God ! I am not confined to one church—to one sect or denomination. I can, from my heart, love and esteem all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Gratitude, however, binds me, by the strongest and most endearing ties, to the people called Methodists—a people with whom I have had the pleasure of taking sweet counsel for the space of five years. But, Sir, you will pardon me, if with candour and frankness I say, that a coldness and barrenness seems to creep in amongst us in this place. I suppose you are somewhat acquainted with the present state of the Presbyterian Church. You know it is a fallen church ; and few of its members make any pretensions to vital godliness. But the case is very different with your people : they are a people detached from all others. The privileges they enjoy are peculiarly favourable to religious knowledge and experience. Yet, though some individuals are ‘ pressing toward the mark,’ it is a fact, that a very general defection has taken place in this neighbourhood, within the last three years, more especially during the last four months. The Lord has, indeed, manifested him-

self in a remarkable manner a few days since, in convincing and converting two boys, who live in the capacity of apprentices to a pious man in this town. They were both strangely affected for three hours, even in their bodies. This, I trust, is only the dawn preceding a brighter Gospel day. Glory be to God in the highest! You will pardon the liberty I have taken in the above remarks. I am intimately connected with the Methodists, many of whom are members of my congregation; and I think we must stand or fall together.

“I imagine, Sir, that some measure ought to be adopted, in order to rescue our common cause from its present ruinous condition. In order to this, an inquiry might be made into the causes of defection, and then propose some expedients, by way of remedy. If an opportunity offered of convening a few of our brethren on such an occasion, I should feel myself highly honoured in being present; but probably this will be impracticable. Perhaps you may not think it improper to confer with some of your friends by letter. A reply from you, as soon as convenient, will be very acceptable.

“A few of Zion’s travellers here, who are pressing after purity of heart, intend to form select associations for mutual assistance. I request your advice on that subject.
* * * With cordial wishes for your success in the work of the Lord, as well as your personal happiness, I am your affectionate brother in Christ,

“B. C.”

No such convention took place; but God, who comforts those who mourn in Zion, gave him to see, shortly after, the revival for which his soul longed.* The following

* See Mr. Ousley’s Letter on the subject.

communication from Mr. Averell refers to the same state of things. Its Christian spirit and import will justify its insertion.

“My very dear Brother—That all the blessings to which you are entitled in the covenant of grace may be realized in your heart and life, is the sincere prayer of my soul concerning you !

“Not to have met you upon your circuit, is to me a subject of regret ; but the consciousness that you are in your place, doing the will of your heavenly Lord, is my comfort. For I can say, that nothing gives me such satisfaction as to find his servants busily employed for him, and his cause prospering in their hands.

“Indeed, I feel a godly jealousy, over many of our dear brethren, when I observe the work of the Lord in a languid state ; though I acknowledge it may, in various instances, decline under the strictest discipline ; yet in a general way, if we are fervent in spirit ourselves, serving the Lord day and night, and conscientious in the discharge of our duty, according to our rules, the gracious work of our Master will flourish.

“I believe there are no ministers that our Master will execute the ‘wo’ upon for ‘doing the work of the Lord deceitfully,’ so much as upon Methodist preachers ; and, therefore, we ought to take most care, not to merit that curse. Nor do I think the same degree of diligence and faithfulness will preserve us from it that shall suffice for other ministers, because of the more enlarged talents that are delivered to us.

“My precious brother, must not suppose that I think you defective in any of the ministerial virtues. No ; would to God I may be worthy of lying at your feet in our Father’s kingdom ! Indeed, I am frequently inclined to charge myself, I am sure, justly, with a great portion of that Laodiceanism that is pervading our Societies. O

circuit; deficiencies were paid up, and a redundancy flowed into the hands of the stewards. No mean evidence of the increase of love to God and man!

In the midst of many mercies of a public and private character, it pleased our heavenly Father to visit us with family affliction. After my dear wife's confinement, all our little ones were severely attacked with the meazles, and instead of my being able to afford help, I became alarmingly ill with spasms in my stomach, accompanied with a constant hiccough, which seemed to baffle medical skill. When brought, apparently, to the last stage of earthly existence, I was mercifully restored: my soul also was much revived and comforted. After my recovery, in May, almost as soon as I was able to go to a distant part of the circuit, I was apprized that my helpless family, with many others, had been exposed to a public calamity. A fire had broken out in Longford, and consumed a number of houses: it appeared likely to reach the one in which they lodged, but, blessed be God, though in the midst of danger, they were preserved from harm.

In winding up our affairs at the close of this year's labour, we had much to afford us satisfaction. Having devoted a day to fasting and prayer, to humble our souls before God, and implore his direction and help, we prepared to attend the annual Conference. I proceeded to Dublin, through my native place, thence to Kells, accompanied by Messrs. Deery, Robert M'Cutcheon, and Robert Armstrong. I preached in the street, and Mr. Deery exhorted; we had a solemn and attentive audience. Having dined at Mr. Nugent's, we proceeded together to Foxbrook, the seat of James Fox, Esq., where we re-deemed the precious moments by pious conversation, singing, and prayer. On those occasions, Christian hospitality converted the mansions of our respectable friends into homes for the Lord's servants; and in this line of

road, the more numerous the guests the greater joy to the family. At this time the company of Mr. Armstrong was exceedingly interesting. He was an aged and respectable local preacher, who, after many years' communion with God, had for a season lost both his Christian confidence and his reason. This was occasioned by some afflictive stroke in his family connexion. He continued, I know not how long, in gloomy despondency of mind, but was then in a sane and happy state. This astonishing change in his spiritual and physical state, was effected by the application of a text of Holy Scripture to his heart, accompanied by a life-giving energy;—in a season of his deepest dejection it was spoken to his inmost soul, “Thy Maker is thine *husband*; the LORD OF HOSTS is his NAME.” The effect was instantaneous: he felt the great truth, and his mental powers were revived, renovated, and unutterably filled with God. As his depression had been very generally the cause of mourning to his Christian friends, he was now going among them, filled with joy and consolation, declaring what great things the Lord had done for him; witnessing every where,

“The Lord can clear the darkest skies;
Can give us day for night:
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight!”

CHAPTER XII.

1806-7.

OUR district meeting, previous to Conference, was held in Dublin, and conducted in great love and unanimity. Love seemed the common atmosphere breathed by preachers and people wherever I visited. Our Conference commenced and ended in the same spirit. My appointment was fixed for the city of Dublin; a station which I neither expected nor desired: for, in whatever light I viewed the subject, the solicitous question forced itself through my heart—"Who is sufficient for these things?" My only refuge was the throne of heavenly grace. By committing the matter to the Lord, my mind became much reconciled, in expectation that he would stand by me, support his own cause, and make the appointment answer some gracious design of his infinite wisdom. My colleagues were Mr. Daniel M'Mullen, a man of integrity and talent, now removed to heaven, and Mr. William Stewart, whose tried fidelity to the cause of Methodism need not be here noticed. Messrs. John Kerr and A. Hamilton were book-steward and editor.

The labours and cares of a preacher in the city of Dublin, especially if he be superintendent, cannot easily be conceived, unless by those who have filled that office: he becomes responsible to fill those pulpits which were occupied by the venerable John Wesley and Fletcher, and a long succession of worthies, their sons in the Gospel; to address frequently crowded audiences, respectable for piety and information; in the presence, too, of several intelligent preachers; to conduct leaders' meetings; attend every branch of our discipline; manage that

living "wheel within a wheel"—THE STRANGER'S FRIEND SOCIETY; cherish the hallowing flame of piety in public band-meetings; bring fresh supplies of edifying information to the oft-returning breakfast-meetings; preside in love-feasts; inspect the day-school; assist and superintend Sunday-schools; instruct the children of our people; visit the widows and orphans; care for the poor of the flock; preach *early*, as well as late, in all our chapels and preaching places; attend public meetings; make sundry collections; patronize and plead for charitable institutions; correspond with distant brethren; make provision for the hospitable entertainment of the Conference; with all the contingencies connected with such an important and central post as the metropolis of Ireland.

I entered on my portion of these services with fear and trembling, (God knoweth) and endeavoured to be faithful, according to the ability which he afforded. My greatest difficulties arose from my own heart, and the many encroachments made upon the precious time which I so greatly required for devotional exercises, study, and private improvement. But I had many advantages, in the recollection of which, I bless God. My brethren were excellent and devoted men. Mr. A. Hamilton was not only helpful as an auxiliary in our ordinary ministrations, but he held himself ready to stand by me whenever the providence of God called for labours beyond the regular routine of our appointments. Our local ministry, especially the Stranger's Friends, were talented, pious, and efficient characters. Our people looked for godly edifying in our discourses, and were far removed from the fastidious and critical spirit of many I have known in small Societies. The system of management worked well; although our leaders' meetings were not always free from warm debates and painful feelings, yet we were generally happy together. A supply of divine

wisdom induced Christian tempers; the brethren then became subject to each other in the Lord, and were able to submit their wills, when they could not agree in judgment. Sometimes these meetings were favoured with extraordinary manifestations of life, and love, and power from on high. May their glory never depart!

After our first quarterly meeting, I made the following entry in my journal—"Thus far, thou Lord, hast been my help and my salvation! In general I have been assisted and encouraged in my ministerial labours. Good has been done. Our congregations are large, the Society is increasing, and peace prevails; yet I have passed through very delicate and trying scenes, as it respects discipline and other parts of my duty."

One of these delicate affairs had engaged my attention from the time I came to Dublin, and I endeavoured to manage it with a tender conscience, without giving offence. Lorenzo Dow was then in the city, frequently preaching and holding meetings in a large room convenient to our chapel in Whitefriar-street. I knew he had been made a blessing to many, and that God was with him. Sometimes I attended there, and assisted in prayer-meetings. This proved a temptation to some, whom I shall not now name; but this was not all: Lorenzo was desirous, before leaving town, to preach in our chapels, and give those who were prejudiced an opportunity of hearing him, at least for once. This was granted, through the consent of a proper meeting, encouraged by our aged and respected steward, Mr. Arthur Keene, who was not ashamed of the grace of God in him. Lorenzo preached in Whitefriar-street and Gravel-walk chapels; but the offence of the *permission granted*, occasioned greater offence, and lay concealed like the materials of an artificial volcano, which burst forth at the approaching Conference.

I was not solitary in my acknowledgment of Lorenzo's

labours, or my approval of him as an instrument by whom God wrought; with his eccentricities, or infirmities, I had nothing to do, any more than with those of his persecutors. Some of my most esteemed and successful brethren were of the same judgment. The following paragraph from a letter of Mr. Ousley, shows his mind on the subject. Dated Sligo, 22nd Sept., 1806.

“ I greatly rejoice to find the dear Dublin friends are well, and best of all, that they are earnestly praying for a revival of the gracious work of the Lord. I do, indeed, enjoy the tidings of its appearance, and also that the Lord is so *manifestly* blessing Lorenzo’s labours. Have you not sometimes thought on St. Paul, in connexion with none, (for a season at least) ranging through vast countries, poor-looking, and sometimes very ragged, and starved in appearance; ‘rude in speech, yet not in knowledge.’ Were *he* to pass through Ireland now, and the people not know it was he; and were he to reach even to the metropolis, think you what reception would he meet among us all? Even though we saw the great—the chief work of God, (the conversion of souls) prospering in his hand! Would this open our eyes? ’Tis a question! Wisdom of words; Oh, how charming!!”

In the same month, Lorenzo sent twenty-seven persons to me, in one body, to join our Society, and put themselves under our pastoral care. Perhaps most of these were converted to God. All of them were under deep concern for salvation. The men, I dispersed through different classes; the women, I formed into a class by themselves, my wife being their leader, which prospered blessedly whilst we continued in Dublin, and I believe continued to prosper. Their names are now before me, and amongst them those of my dear friends, Mrs. C——, and her amiable daughter Mrs. H——, now the well-known and esteemed wife of one of our most efficient

preachers. I trust there are few Christian pastors who could refuse to recognize the seal of the Holy Spirit on such a "living epistle."

In January, 1807, at the annual breakfast-meeting, it was manifest the hand of the Lord had been with us for good. Notwithstanding the extra monthly collection, raised for liquidating the debt on Wesley chapel, and the depressed state of trade, &c., our funds for the regular support of the work of God were never in a better state, nor afforded so much in one year. Only the fund for our own poor, and that for the Stranger's Friend Society, were low, on account of the vast number of claimants. This was indeed a blessed morning; and I trust that the word of the Lord given me for the evening service, will be for ever verified respecting this people, Haggai ii. 19, "From this day will I bless you."

To preach the annual charity sermon in favour of our excellent alms-house, which fell to my lot the first year, appeared sufficiently formidable, without the strange things which some of our sympathizing friends told me respecting some eminent preachers who had preceded me in that good work:—their fears and their failures!

The widow's unwearied friend, I might say their husband, Mr. Arthur Keene, took all his accustomed care to have it published "from Dan even to Beersheba;" and certainly we had a noble congregation, consisting of the lord mayor, sheriffs, aldermen, members of Parliament, ministers of various denominations, and a crowd of rich and respectable persons, (the poor were warned to stay away that night,) and all behaved with much decorum. The singing was delightful; and through mercy I felt composure and energy of mind, and was assisted to plead for the charity with sincerity and tender affection. My text was 1 Tim. v. 3, "Honour widows that are widows indeed;" and such truly were our widows—twenty-

four in number—being of one heart, in one house, whose ages added together would make a total of above seventeen hundred years. Although there was a charity sermon in Bride's church the same day, which was supposed to have affected us, our collection amounted to above £196. Thus, through the help afforded in time of need, this formidable mountain also became a plain. Blessed be God!

Among the many claims made upon Christian benevolence, a case of no ordinary occurrence was brought home to my heart about this time, by a train of almost irresistible circumstances—that of the venerable Mr. J. P. This aged saint, and servant of Jesus Christ, was now superannuated. His good wife and children were endeavouring to procure a maintenance by engaging in business, especially his eldest son, who was engaged in the manufacture of woollen cloth in England—a business in which he attempted to employ his brother as an assistant. At first the prospect was flattering, but the failure of a person connected with the business, and a train of distressing events, brought on a reverse in his affairs, and dashed their expectations to the ground. Mr. J. P. had put his name to a bill for £50, which became due without a provision. His son, who was to have paid the bill, became insolvent, and was plunged into such embarrassed circumstances, that he went on board a man-of-war, leaving a wife and child in a state of entire destitution. Mr. J. P. had, in his distress, borrowed money from several persons, who now became clamorous; and his professed friends and brethren, many of them at least, were not sparing in the language of reproach. To add to his affliction, his good wife and large family were without the means of subsistence. He travelled from the North to Dublin, to see about his affairs, principally on foot, notwithstanding a lameness of some years standing, in consequence of which exertion,

one of his feet became so injured, that he was obliged to submit to retirement in a friend's house, where I had the opportunity of frequently visiting him, of witnessing his Christian spirit, and of calmly investigating his affairs. This circumstance, under the gracious management of Providence, led to his deliverance. I record the transaction, as a *special* instance of the Lord's goodness, that his holy name may be glorified, and his suffering servants encouraged to trust in the never-failing Friend of the friendless ; who can so easily turn their captivity, and bless the exertions of those who cordially and faithfully interest themselves for their good. When I engaged in this labour of love, I met with every discouragement, but I was determined to make the effort. In the first instance, I laid the affair before my brethren, the preachers. We then advised him, First, To make out a statement of all his debts. Second, To give up his salary into my hands for the advantage of his creditors. Third, To sell off any little property he could dispose of, and pay every person as far as possible. Fourth, To advise every member of his family to engage in some sort of industry. Fifth, To borrow no more money on any account, but refer Mrs. J. P. to me for whatever was indispensable for the support of the family. With all of which he readily complied.

My next expedient was, to speak and write to his creditors, and such friends as I hoped would assist, and then pay each in order, as soon as I had sufficient funds, sending his family such supplies as I was able. All went on well, and prospered. Indeed Mr. A. wrote me a tremendous letter for my interference ; though, after all, it discovered more of the terrible *skin* of the lion, than of his teeth and claws. Before I was removed from Dublin, Mr. J. P.'s debts were all discharged, and he had a small balance to commence the world. The application in his

favour was not extensive. Dr. Coke, the princely Butterworth, and a few friends, accomplished that work of mercy; and our aged friend is now before the throne, God himself having wiped away all tears from his eyes. The Conference has done justice to his character : but when I reflect on the sufferings of that good man, and the “hard sayings” which I was obliged to hear respecting him, at the time of his deepest distress, I feel gratified in closing this account with an instructive extract of one of his letters to Mrs. J. P., speaking the language of his heart on that occasion, dated Feb. 12, 1807. “Your letter to Mr. Lanktree I have read. My deliberate thoughts, after viewing the whole state of our case is, that the more excellent way will be to give up the entire of what we have, without reserve, to our creditors, and cast ourselves and our offspring into the arms of Him who holds the universe in the hollow of his hand. O, his heart is full of love ; his hand is full of blessings ! It is only for him to open his hand, and satisfy the desire of every living creature. Notwithstanding that we have been disappointed of support coming to us through the industry of our own children, which would have been most gratifying to us, yet we need not fear ; for the fountain of divine mercy is still full and overflowing ; and our heavenly Father, who knows that we have need of these things, can as easily open fresh springs where we know not, as when he gave water out of the rock, and quails in the wilderness. Doubt not, my dearest, but he will send you, in quantity and quality, the good things of this life, when and where it will answer best to promote his own glory, and our spiritual and eternal good—only let us follow him fully. In order to which, let us examine ourselves, and find out every way whereby we may have heretofore grieved his Spirit, or gone contrary to the order of his providence, by yielding to follow where our own inclination led. The present ‘frowning providence’ has

given us reason to *suspect ourselves*, and is a loud call to strict examination. O that infinite wisdom may assist us to perform that most important task, that we may descend deeper into the valley of humility, rise higher into the love of God, and go on from strength to strength, pressing towards the mark for the prize of our high calling! O, trust Him with all your temporal concerns, who will most assuredly supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus! Observe how a believer under an inferior dispensation, found grace to trust God, under far more discouraging circumstances. Abraham was called to leave his native land, live among strangers, and there offer up his beloved and only son; whereas we are only called to sacrifice our little property to pay our debts, in our native land, among sympathizing friends, some of whom heretofore, when we were less distressed, gave indubitable proof of their Christian regard.

“I have got injury from a nail, in one of my feet, which will detain me the longer from home. Do make sale of every thing, but what is indispensable to preserve life for the present, and let Mr. Smith send an account of the whole, together with the amount of all our debts, to Mr. Lanktree, that all may see that we act with the strictest justice, according to our power. I am, your sympathizing husband.” * * * *

A most singular occurrence took place about the same time, respecting a distressed woman in Rathdrum, which may be properly noted in this place. It bears the evidence of an extraordinary interposition of Providence, all the facts of which came under my own notice. Mrs. D., the person referred to, was married to a bad man, who forsook her and their seven children, leaving them in the deepest distress. She was acquainted with me, being a member of our Society when I travelled the Wicklow circuit. In the crisis of her misery, she sent me a letter,

in which she stated, that the reason why she addressed me was, a dream she had the night before. She imagined herself in Dublin, with her mind involved in miserable anxiety, not knowing what to do, or where to go; that she met me in the street, and told me her distress; that I laid my hands on her head, and began to pray for her, when she felt all sorrow removed, and awoke, filled with joy and consolation.

I wrote to her, requesting she would inform me explicitly of her whole case, and whether she could dispose of any of her children. Through the kindness of my friends affording me encouragement, I brought herself and five of her children to town. My friend, Mr. R. Freeman, took the eldest as an apprentice, three were provided for in a school, and herself and youngest child were otherwise comfortably disposed of—all within a few days after her arrival!

Another fact, belonging to the same class of events, will illustrate the tender care of the "Father of mercies" towards the widow and the fatherless. The first mistress of our female orphan school, and her daughter, had been left in afflictive circumstances by the death of her husband. The house she lived in when he died, belonged to Miss Hill, an old maid, of a religious and poetic turn of mind. There were heavy arrears of rent due to Miss H., which Mrs. K. could not speedily discharge out of her salary. At length Miss H. determined on legal proceedings, which greatly distressed our afflicted sister. She came to me, and entreated I would go and plead with her adversary, and gain time, if possible, giving me, at the same time, a pound note, as part payment. I went, and brought with me that most venerable man, old Mr. Whitstone. At first Miss H. was very rough, and said we must apply to her attorney. I expostulated with her, and proposed prayer; told her I had a little money, and wished to see

the account. She softened at once, desired a young woman to bring the book—the balance was, perhaps, £16. “I dare say,” said she, “you think me very cruel; I would think little of forgiving the whole.” “That would be the best proof,” I replied, “of your good-will to the widow.” She accordingly cancelled the whole debt, and signed her name to a slip of paper, making it sure. On my return, I informed Mrs. K. of my rough reception, and then, without explanation, showed her Miss H.’s release. Seldom have the conflicting feelings of a pious and tender mind been more strongly or pleasingly evinced than on that occasion. The dejection—the surprise—the flood of tears—the grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of God! Miss H., I am certain, had happy feelings in her act of generosity. Had she witnessed, as I did, that scene, she would have had a rich reward.

CHAPTER XIII.

1807—8.

THE work of God was progressive through the land this year, of which I had many delightful intimations. The Dublin Mission, taking in many important places in the vicinity and suburbs, conducted by Messrs. Bell and Alcorn, was successful; but that on which Messrs. Hamilton and Ousley laboured, was signally owned of God. Of the Missions generally, through Ireland, we observed, in our next address to the British Conference—“We would not pass over in silence our beloved Missionaries, whose labours the Lord remarkably owns. A considerable num-

ber, through their instrumentality, have been brought, in the past year, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God."

Some of the particulars of that blessed work I shall lay before the Christian public. They were edifying to many at the time they were first received; and although they have lain by for some years, they will, like old wine, yield an improved flavour and gratification—at least to old disciples.

22nd September, Mr. Ousley wrote thus from Sligo:—
"As to the work of God among us, since I wrote to you last, I do not know rightly how I could describe it. But this I say, the whole country round seems to be moved. At our two last great field meetings, many were convinced and converted. Glory to his name! At one of these meetings heavy rain came on, the men crying to God for mercy, and the young women, with their white thin clothes, were exposed to it, and yet seemed regardless; so earnest were they in pursuit of salvation. After we were obliged to go away, good Mr. Caldwell, a Presbyterian minister, and a man of God, staid on in all the rain, praying with the penitents until near night. It is only eternity will tell what the Lord has done here lately among us. * * * I am just going to the quarterly meeting, and trust I'll have more good news before evening."

"*Half-past Six*—I am just come from the meeting this moment—one of the most glorious, perhaps, you or I ever saw. After about an hour's speaking of experiences, the whole house, crowded as it was from end to end, broke out into one burst of praise and prayer. The cries of penitents, and praises of believers mingled, were most delightful to those 'who know the joyful sound.' Brother Smith sits near me, and says the number of souls brought this day to God, in his judgment, is about thirty, at least.

He says he never saw any thing like it. I feel almost loath to write about these great things, as some are unbelieving. This day, Mr. Caldwell has informed me that the Threshers warned their Priest, a few days ago, not to oppose Ousley any more, at his peril: the Priest gave me some opposition in the street lately.

“ These Threshers, are bodies of men that go at night and shake the corn, or cut the flax, of such as take tithe or cant for it; and punish the Priests if they think they charge too much for their services, and the people that pay them. They are making them come down one-half in their former prices for their ‘wares.’ It may be the time is hastening that they will *buy them no more*.

“ My love to all the preachers and brethren. May a shower—a heavy shower—of blessings from heaven, fall upon them all! Your affectionate brother,

“ G. OUSLEY.”

From the same, including an account of an extraordinary Camp Meeting in America. Sligo, 24th Nov. 1806.

“ Dear brother Lanktree—I need no apology for hastening to send you the copy of a letter received here by one of our friends, a few days ago. I think it the most extraordinary I ever saw :—

‘ *Philadelphia, Sept. 13, 1806.*

‘ Dear Mother—This comes with my love, and to give you an account how the work of the Lord prospers here. About eighty miles from this city, we had one of the greatest camp meetings that was ever known on this continent. Myself, with six of my family, took our passage in a sloop, with about sixty more, bound for the camp meeting. We had a glorious time on the water, for three days and nights, singing and praising God. It seemed a little heaven all night; the power of the Lord was present, and many souls were set at liberty. As for myself, I

went to bed to sleep, but could not; the constraining influence induced me to come on deck, and kneel down with the rest; many, that night and next morning, professed to have received sanctification. When we landed, we marched eight miles, singing the praises of God until we joined our brethren who were encamped in the woods, where we remained eight days.

‘The manner of this encampment was as follows. The ground, containing twenty acres, was enclosed with a boarded fence. There were 470 tents, besides waggons, carts, and chairs. Twelve dozen of official guards were appointed, and seven persons chosen to blow with trumpets three times a day. Dear Mother, to hear those trumpets sounding round the camp, every morning and evening, when reports were made of the numbers brought to God, with the shouting of the people, the clapping of hands, and praising of God, you would think that it would rend the very heavens!

‘The situation of the preachers was in the middle of the camp, between the white and black people. There were about eight thousand of the former, and four of the latter, as near as we could calculate. The whole number of the preachers was thirty-five, besides class-leaders and official members. There was a boarded enclosure round their stand. This was called the mourner’s aisle. After public worship, all those who felt distress were invited to come forward. To behold how they crowded in on those occasions was truly astonishing. Scarcely any who kneeled down, but were blessed, in answer to the fervent prayers of the people of God. On one occasion, the overwhelming power of God came down, and set hundreds of souls at liberty. Even the proud and *grand*, who came in their coaches to hear the *Methodists shouting in the wilderness*, were convinced of sin, and converted before their return!

‘Glory be to God that ever I was born to see this day!

What my eyes have seen and my heart felt, pen cannot write, or tongue explain! My brother Thomas got a great blessing—it was the happiest night to him he ever saw; he stayed up till morning, singing and praising God. Sister Mary is very happy. The number of souls computed to have been blessed with pardon or sanctification at this meeting, amounted in all to 2240. Hallelujah!

‘Please to show this letter to Mr. Charles Graham, as he was the first instrument in bringing me to God in my young days, at about the age of seven. I would count it a favour if he would write to me. I am, dear mother, your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

‘ANN COOKE.’

“Now, my brother, I have finished this pleasing task, hoping this communication may prove to our Dublin friends, and to those who have not yet believed, as a *flying angel*, coming over from distant lands to tell us and them of the power and willingness of Christ to save: that every heart might be enlarged, lay aside unbelief that starves them, and open their mouth, and speak with confidence, that the glorious work of God may break out on every hand. Your affectionate brother,

GIDEON OUSLEY.”

“P.S.—I must not omit a circumstance that occurred as I came through the mountains home, after preaching at night in a new place. The couple where I had lodged, told me, that the preachers could not come there any more, for they were afraid of the Threshers. My grieved soul complained to the Lord against Satan, who wanted to turn us out. Next morning the people came again together. We wept under the meltings of divine grace, and then four or five houses were open to receive us. From that, before I tasted food, I rode off to another place, and gathered the people, Romanists and Protestants. While I yet preached, through the power of God’s holy word

and Spirit, an outcry began. Among the rest, a respectable Romanist cried out and prayed most vehemently. After the meeting, when I was settling houses to receive the Sligo preachers, as it was on their circuit, he spoke out, and said, ‘Come, Sir, two days in the week to my house, and welcome, indeed.’ ‘O,’ said I, ‘only for the Priests that are ready to eat you up, many of you would do so.’ ‘The Priest!’ said he, indignantly; ‘I don’t care a straw for the Priest; not I, indeed.’ I preached here on Saturday, and on Tuesday last in a fair, in the mountains, among the Threshers. They gave me thousands of blessings. The harvest—the great harvest, will yet come!” From the same, dated 14th Dec. 1806. The place not mentioned. The Christian Missionary, braving every danger, that souls may be saved, and preserved from the destroyer, is strongly marked, and the native Irish character, under a gracious influence, appears in a truly interesting light. The apparition of St. Peter is related, and left with the reader.

“My very dear brother—I am indeed glad to hear of Lorenzo’s success. The wisdom of man is foolishness with God—for whom man despises, God honours; but some will not see. Having finished my tour through the north end of our circuit, I know it will be gratifying to you and my friends to mention the most striking occurrences.

“1. Then we are getting all the single people we can, with the children, to commit the Holy Scriptures to memory, which they do with great pleasure. One boy said a part of a chapter who does not yet know the letters.

“2. The Lord favoured me with witnessing many conversions in several places, and, blessed be his name, we had lively meetings everywhere—many weeping, and many shouting the praises of God; and that, too, amidst such troublesome times! Hallelujah!

“In one place, where ten or twelve of the Romanists had joined Society, the Priest, a great drunkard, came among them. This cruel kite came, and greatly terrified and scattered them; threatening to curse—yea, to make the very hair to fall off their head; and, when dying, not give them the ‘seal of Christ’ (the ointment!), and then, what would they do? But when I came again, I ran into their cabins, and, poor things, they sprang towards me, with their eyes dancing with joy and affection.

“I preached them a sermon, on false prophets; the Lord greatly blessed it to the congregation; two souls professed to have obtained converting grace, and all were greatly moved. ‘O the Priest—the Priest!’ cried one in Irish, ‘why is he hindering us from all this comfort and sweetness?’ Next morning again, I had a large barn well filled, and surely it was heaven upon earth! The first that fell on her knees and cried aloud, was a Roman woman, which affected the whole house. She was soon released from her burden, and praised God aloud. Then a Protestant young woman felt exquisite distress, and was blessedly comforted. The next was a Romanist, who roared from the disquietude of his soul; after a little time his heart got light, and he glorified God. Then a Protestant man cried to God most piteously, and soon found peace and pardon, and so on, till I suppose more than half-a-dozen in a few moments were made to rejoice in the Lord. ‘O,’ said a converted Protestant in Irish, ‘God is dealing finely and fairly, for he is giving us one about of each sort.’ ‘O,’ said the Romanists, ‘the Priest may talk on; that is all he’ll have for it.

“3. Lastly, a wondrous thing I’ll now relate. Matthew Rogers, of whom I think I made mention in a letter before, told me, that on the night in which he was struggling for salvation (a night or two after I was last round), he came out of his bed, and for an hour or two he was in

an agony of prayer, his family being asleep; while yet he prayed, with his face to the ground, he saw a light suddenly shining, and conceiving the house had taken fire, he lifted himself up to see where; but to his astonishment, the house was full of light, and two personages stood by him, one like our Saviour nailed to the cross, looking upward, and two straps tied under his chin, binding a crown of thorns on his head. The other, accosting him, said, 'Be not afraid; we are not bad spirits, but good; my name is Peter; I am come with the Lord. Only pray on, and no harm will happen unto you. Go to Priest Gilboy, and tell him to quit his drinking whiskey, and to preach to the people. The Priests are destroying, and not doing by their people as they ought.' He replied, having lost all fear, 'Is it not fitter for some of his own flock to warn him than me?' To which the apparition answered, 'You will have to go yourself.' Rogers again replied, 'But he will not believe me.' Then said he, 'Go, and I will give you a token that he will know, and he will believe you. Tell him, that he was lately in a passion, pursuing a person who had vexed him; and when passing over the bridge, his horse stumbled, and threw him over the battlement: he was in danger of being killed, but the Lord pitied and saved him at that time, that he might repent; therefore, go and warn him.' In an instant, while he yet wished to speak more, all vanished. The person on the cross did not speak at all. Rogers is counted a steady, sensible, respectable man. He did warn the Priest, who attempted not to deny the token given him, but said he would die if he would quit the whiskey; and hoped St. Peter would not be angry if he should take a little.*

* I showed the above letter to Mr. Ousley this day, June 30, 1834, who remembered the relation quite well. He says, that the

"I cannot doubt the veracity of the man, though all I can do is to wonder at the relation.

"My paper is full. Your own, G. OUSLEY."

Most providentially, when the cry for the Word of God became urgent on Mr. Ousley's mission, we found a bale of Bibles in sheets, left by Mr. Matthias Joyce. These we got bound, and sent them to meet the pressing demand. I procured, also, from various quarters, further supplies; which will explain the two following letters.

From Mr. Ousley.

"Dear brother Lanktree—You will be rejoiced to hear glad tidings, and such I have to tell you, thanks be to God Almighty. I have just come from the north part of our circuit; the people are bowing before the word of the HOLY ONE, as the trees before a southern gale, or as the oaks before a storm; some pulled up by the roots, whose fall makes the wood re-echo with the crash; so that the villagers come running to see what is the matter.

"Last week, one or two old men, after a mighty struggle, found the pearl of great price, and a young girl in another village; and so clear is their testimony, and so bold, that others are alarmed. Six or seven more obtained mercy on Saturday, and many more are on the stretch for God's salvation. Ten or twelve Romanists have joined us in one village, and more, that stood at a distance, are drawing near in spite of the Priests, who are greatly enraged. I preached a sermon on 'Thou art Peter,' &c. The Lord made it to shake the foundations of many. The

Priest preached an alarming sermon on the occasion. The circumstances altogether made a great noise in the country. Some of the people said, "It could not be St. Peter, but an evil spirit; for why would he come to a Protestant, and not to ourselves?" Others said, "Be that as it may, we have got one good sermon by it at any rate."

conversions following—the cries of penitents, and rejoicings of believers—have had a blessed effect. O man, rejoice; our wilderness will blossom as the rose; there is a blessed stir.

“ More good news! The poor Romanists have bought the Testaments in a manner as fast as the Protestants; we have not one now. O hasten, hasten; let us have the books which we requested from the Book-room, with the Bibles and Testaments. The places that did not get them are crying out.

“ The Threshers have come upon my poor mare, but they have only taken off her four shoes, and the hair off her tail. Thanks be to God for his care of us in this troubled country!

“ A Romanist from Killala, who heard me preach on the ‘ Oil and Purgatory,’ came last Monday to consult me. He took a Testament home to his family. He told me the Priests were hearing me, though I did not see them. Some of the Romanists came to the Priest, and asked him could he gainsay or contradict what I had said? As I had challenged any man to come forward, why, if he could, did he not appear? ‘ Oh,’ said he, ‘ ye’ll be all preachers by and by!’ ‘ You a Priest!’ said they; ‘ you are a cabbage stalk!’ These people have many consultations one with another, and the Priests are much cast down.

“ We have two fine fellows, that lay buried in these villages, now all on fire, and helping us most valiantly. One of them was a Romanist, and is very expert at the Irish, and was public catechist for the Priest. God is greatly acknowledging their labours, and some more are beginning to break forth in prayer.”

“ *Ballina, 9th March, 1807.*

“ My very dear and ever-esteemed Brother—I sat down to write to you after my last round on our circuit; but as

I was just going to meet dear Lorenzo, I deferred it until we should part. At length I take up my pen to tell you all the news I can—thanks be to God I have good news. We have a blessed work going on through the whole circuit; scarce a day we do not see souls brought to our Redeemer. The Lord has raised up another public character lately, who is of decent parentage. He now exhorts and prays most vehemently in Irish and English. His wife and brother are converted too. All through the circuit, we are blessedly getting on. New places are still opening, and some of the great ones invite us to their houses. I preached in the high sheriff's, and am next Sabbath to be at a magistrate's. Lord be praised!

“I was lately at a village, where I am informed twelve persons have found peace since I came away, four of whom are Romanists. In that same village, the Priest and I have had hard contesting who will have the people. When I am away, he threatens, curses, &c., and sometimes extorts promises they will hear me no more; but when I come again, they break through their cords like Sampson, weep and pray, and hang around me—men, women, and children. I teach the children, and make them little presents, which is very pleasing to the parents. Last Thursday the Priest came, and called out one of the women—‘Polly, so you have gone to hear the preacher again; Polly, I will cut you off—I will drive you from my flock—I will excommunicate you, and John Willis, and Thady Towhy, and John, and all of you, so I will.’ ‘Well, Sir,’ said Polly, ‘so you can, to be sure; but I hope you cannot drive us from God.’ He walked off, and the next day sent his man to gather corn from them all; but they all refused, and would not give him a grain! Yesterday morning, one of their little daughters received the love of God at their class-meeting, and then stood and made all the house weep, speaking to her mother—‘If,’

said she, ‘you felt what I feel—if you would but get the love of God, you would never again be afraid of the Priest.’ O Lord, hasten the time when their bonds shall be broken!

“I rode about one hundred miles with Lorenzo. The blessing of the Lord was very conspicuous in all his ministrations. God be with him!”

“*Ballina, 3d April, 1807.*”

“We have now got 500 Testaments within these few months. We had scarce one of them, and about seventy more that we had with us from Dublin, when the last parcel arrived. The Lord bless you for your exertion in procuring them, and the Incorporated Society for giving them! Surely it was a charity which only eternity will fully disclose. To have the word of God in the hands of so many who lately lay in darkness—Oh, how blessed! These three things, out of many, are the consequences. 1st. I suppose about one hundred of the youth are getting select parts by heart for us, thus sounding the word of God in the families, day by day. Surely this must have a good effect. 2d. The grown people who hear us, read the Scriptures, and are reading, too, the doctrines we preach in the book of God. Thus their prejudices are removed, and they yield with trembling hearts and flowing eyes to the truth, and lead new lives to the glory of God. 3d. The Romanists get some, and whether the Priests will or will not, they read together, and compare them at times with the Douay Testament. They begin to find that the Protestant Testament is not false, as was represented, the substance of both being much the same, and then say, the Testament alone is right.”

From Mr. William Hamilton.

“My very dear Brother,—We have got the preaching-house up, ready for covering in, and we are getting some of the people converted. The serjeant-major of the

Waterford militia is, I believe, savingly brought to God. Our new classes are doing well, and are getting more sensible and steady. The big houses that we got opened last year still continue to make us welcome, take our magazines, &c.; so they are beginning to see we are right, and wishing that all the clergy were like us. Almost all the Protestants are our friends, and many of the Papists too. The Bibles and Testaments we procured for them, they are taking in spite of the Priests. Dominick Scott bought a Testament the other day, to see if it was like one that Nora Boylan had, (the Douay), and such comparing as they had, would make you laugh, if you were half dead. The conclusion was, that Dominick's was just as good as Nora's.

“ There is a great spirit of inquiry among them. They know us every where, and we are the conversation of town and country. Upon the whole, the devil is not likely to get near as many souls from this country as he expected. Some of our new members are very happy and useful: our own souls are greatly comforted among them. There is much good doing among the children in every place, which, I think, will never be forgotten. A Curate in Easkey is zealously on our side.”

The Conference, 1807, having arrived, I had, with my brethren, a busy, but happy time, providing accommodations for the preachers.

Dr. Coke was our President, M. Tobias our Secretary. Adam Averell, as usual, our representative to the British Conference.

Through the past year we had an increase of members, and gracious encouragements to labour and not faint.

Mr. Stewart, my excellent colleague, was removed to the Drogheda circuit, and Mr. M'Kee, one of the most amiable of men—holy and devoted to his ministry—occupied his place, and lodged in my house.

When our Conference concluded, a few zealous Dublin

friends accompanied Dr. Coke and Mr. Averell to Liverpool, where the British Conference was convened that year. A few extracts from their letters, respecting the character of the English Methodists, and the pulpit talents of several of those worthies, who have since then been removed to the church triumphant, will, I trust, appear suitably in this place.

“ Liverpool, July 28th, 1807.

“ Very dear Brother—I do not forget that you expressed a desire I should write to you from England; this I do most willingly, but regret that I am inadequate to perform a task so delightful.

“ After landing in Hollyhead, with Mr. Averell, in the evening we went round the town, inviting as many as we met to come to preaching. To our great astonishment few understood English—no, not even the children. Mr. Averell preached from ‘Behold the Lamb of God:’ the word was greatly acknowledged. A leader sung and prayed in the *Welsh language*, whose eloquent devotion seemed to exceed all that went before. Next morning, we all got together aloft on the day coach. Our coachman was a religious character, and pointed out a spot of ground where a field meeting was lately held, and upwards of ten thousand people assembled, encouraged by a wealthy religious gentleman. The road is beautiful between Hollyhead and Bangor ferry, which we crossed in a boat, and met Dr. Coke twice on this day’s journey. On the succeeding day we reached Wrexham, where we found a loving people, and a very neat chapel. Mr. Averell preached at five o’clock in the morning and seven in the evening. We next drove to Chester. Here the kindness of a rich, yet plain and loving family, cannot be forgotten. O, my brother, you would admire the simplicity and uniform neatness which prevail in this place. But I must resume.

Mr. Averell preached to a large congregation in a beautiful chapel, and 'the shout of a king was in the camp.' Remaining a night here, we took our places in a canal boat, in which was a number of preachers bound for the same destination. Leaving the boat, we crossed the river Mersey about ten miles in a packet; and about five o'clock, Saturday evening, landed in Liverpool. Mr. Averell hitherto was our guide, and a more agreeable one I have not met.

"Anticipating the approaching Sabbath, we were not disappointed. At seven o'clock in the morning, we attended Pitt-street chapel, a superb building, which was extremely crowded. Mr. Henry Moore preached from 'Men should always pray,' &c. The immense concourse were like the parched ground receiving the precious rain; every heart seemed to be on the alert, in the full exercise of faith to embrace the blessing accompanying the word. I bless God for that ordinance. At ten o'clock, we heard Dr. Coke, on the necessity of the indwelling Spirit. God was with him of a truth. At four o'clock, we heard a studied, laboured, rhetorical discourse, which did not delight me; but at six o'clock, full compensation was made by the greatest sermon I ever heard, from him whom I have long considered to be the greatest divine extant, ADAM CLARKE. He occupied nearly two hours; but the interest felt in the ministry of this man of God, and the effect of divine unction resting on all around, who were as still as midnight, were such as I never witnessed. He took for his subject Luke xxiv. 45, 46, 47; and in the discussion was great above any thing before known to me. On the validity and advantage of the Sacred Oracles he excelled, but on the greatness of the Atonement—its extent and efficacy—he appeared unparalleled. Do not think I exaggerate. I only regret my impoverished memory, which will not enable me to retain the truths delivered;

but some indelible impressions are, I trust, left on my heart. Blessed be God, that Ireland has her worthies here, as well as in her own land. I suppose that not less than 18,000 heard the Gospel, in and out of doors, on Sabbath evening.

“ It would, I assure you, afford opportunity for reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, to most Societies I have met in Ireland, to behold the Christian appearance of the English Methodists, particularly the females. Indeed, you would be inclined to infer that they are a *new race* of beings, bearing so little of the semblance of fallen Eve. No curled or braided hair—no veils or frippery! Shall we let them excel us? I hope not. May a spirit of holy emulation take place among us, and all study to imitate Christ in all things;—that we may adorn, and not despise any Gospel precept!

“ Please give my love to all the preachers. I wish you were all here; I think you would prove a blessing to the people, and be additionally blessed in your own souls. Believe me to be, dear Brother L——, yours sincerely.”

From the same.—Liverpool, August, 1807.

“ Very dear Brother,—Since I wrote last I had refreshing seasons, and heard the most celebrated preachers in the English connexion. I had breakfasted with Mr. Bradburn, and from his uncouth appearance and procedure, I did not feel greatly prepossessed in his behalf; yet, as I am a curious being, I attended where he preached last Lord’s day, and a greater variety of pertinent and useful matter I think I have not heard, from “ My yoke is easy,” &c. He showed the religion of Christ to be truly pleasant. I have heard that it was intended, this Conference, to carry into effect the founding of a seminary for English preachers. Last Lord’s day I again

heard Adam Clarke, on "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience," &c.; to do him justice, it amply repaid me for the time and expense I incurred by this excursion. The crowd was very great, though three chapels were open at the same time.

"Last night I heard that venerable follower of John Wesley, Joseph Benson, on—'Peter went out, and wept bitterly.' Oh, my brother, such unction as attended the word! Such melting hearts and streaming eyes are not, I believe, very usual here! I told Mr. Myles, and other preachers, that it was like an *Irish Methodist sermon*. For I have got some rubs, and I assure you I have no objection to retaliate; I hope in a good spirit. God has blessed this visit to my soul and body. I do desire to glorify him in all things, &c. I am, dear brother, truly yours."

The following extract from the British Address to the General Conference in America, gives a satisfactory statement of the prosperity of Methodism among us for that year.

"In this kingdom, so long distinguished by every privilege congenial to real religion, there has been this year an increase of above seven thousand members to our Societies, and near a thousand in Ireland, where the Missionaries have been greatly blessed in their arduous undertaking, particularly in weakening the destructive influence of the Man of Sin; and, we trust, in hastening *the total overthrow of idolatry and superstition.*"

At this time, we had to lament the disastrous death of Mr. Darragh. Mr. William Wilson, who had been appointed his colleague on the Limerick circuit, sent me the following particulars respecting that mournful event, with his improvement of the subject.

"On Thursday morning, 29th of July, our dear brother journeyed near the town of Birr, on his way to this city,

(Limerick.) A narrow part of the road appeared before him, cut away on one side, and soldiers handling their arms on the other. Here Mrs. Darragh gave him intimation of danger, but he drove on; and as the horse passed over, he startled, and, lo! there, in that unhappy spot, horse and all fell to the bottom of the pit, and the consequence was that dislocation, which ended in death. After getting into Birr, two *butchers*, rather than surgeons, came to him, and, for three weary hours, pulled and dragged him, until the arm was mightily inflamed, and the skin torn off, yet the bone not set in its place. He came to this town, in company with Mr. Mayne, and appeared perfectly unruffled and serene—the mind's purity having communicated to the body a secret sympathetic aid. Here an eminent bone-setter, yet only a plain countryman, notwithstanding the time which had elapsed, and the swelling of the parts, set the bone in a few minutes. I feared a mortification, and wished measures to be taken to prevent, but was baffled by the bone-setter.

“About sixteen days after this, there appeared very bad symptoms; and three days after, he fell back, in presence of his wife and mine, closing his eyes as if dead; but soon revived, opening his eyes again, yet said nothing. Being helped to bed, he said, ‘The Lord giveth his beloved sleep.’ Said one standing by, ‘The Lord is with you.’ ‘He is with me,’ was the reply. Having slept for a considerable time, a friend said, ‘Death is approaching fast.’ He answered, ‘I do not fear the consequence.’

“He began to think of the advantage of a settee, which he said would be very refreshing to stretch upon; for he seemed after all, to have no expectation of immediate death, or the danger of his case. When the settee was provided, he arose with very little help, and walked tolerably stout. When sitting down, he said nothing; but

turning down his head, all strength failed, and in about five minutes he expired.

Thus suddenly and strangely were accomplished, the circumstances leading to the end of that blessed man! He bore his great affliction with astonishing serenity; and in the keenest agonies of pain, there was an expression of it in his aspect very remarkable—and, as I was informed by those who attended him, no complaining expression ever escaped from his lips.

When we see a dear brother in strong pain, we hear a lecture on the nature of sin, which, with a kind of intuition, enables us to think of its evil, as we never can by cool reasoning. Should not these considerations deaden us to the world, and make us patient towards all men; suffering no talent to remain unoccupied, nor any moment of life to pass unimproved? Could we but behold, in thought, the happy spirit leaving the chamber of death, soaring above the clouds, leaving the sun and stars behind; and keep him still in view as he advances to the regions of eternal bliss, till the heaven of heavens open, and a band of angels meet and conduct him to the throne of God; we should then regard death as a most delightful passage to eternal bliss. On Wednesday morning, Aug. 28, his body was presented before the pulpit in our preaching-house, while I endeavoured to describe the blessed man and his blessed death, from Rev. xiv. 13.

Our connexion sustained another serious loss about the same time, by Mr. John Joyce being necessitated to give up his public ministry among us. He was a promising youth; and his conduct towards me was of the most filial description. Previously to his travelling, he kept a shop, and when he gave himself to the work of the ministry, transferred his business to his brother and brother-in-law, holding himself accountable to the merchants to whom they were introduced. They had not sufficient capability

for the business, were badly treated by designing men, became involved, and almost ruined, in the course of one year. Mr. Joyce had no alternative but to return to business, which he did with spirit, cleared off his debts, then went to America, where, after some heavy losses, he became an Independent minister in Philadelphia, and was followed by most of his family.

The state of mind experienced by such a man under the circumstances referred to, must be most trying; a short account of his exercises I shall give from a letter now before me, that others, who are passing through similar trials, may be encouraged to exert all their powers, and put their trust in Him who will be glorified in their deliverance. He writes—"Whether I shall ever be able to resume my place as an itinerant preacher of Christ's Gospel, is what at this distance I cannot determine. Difficulties appear almost insurmountable. A man without capital would be badly able to get on, but to be nearly — hundred pounds deficient, is far worse; sometimes I fear I shall sink in the undertaking; but when I consider the first article of my creed, my soul takes courage. 'I BELIEVE IN GOD'—the self-existent, all-pervading, almighty God of love: the God and Father of *my* Lord Jesus Christ! 'Why art thou cast down, Oh, my soul! Is not thy God able to deliver thee?' Hugh Gregg of Leighlinbridge is dead; but he died in the Lord: He is happy, happy, at *rest* for ever. Oh that I had wings like a dove! I surely would also fly away and be at rest. I am ashamed when I look back. Mercy and goodness on the Lord's part; ingratitude and infidelity on mine. I have been comparing myself to a man taken from the torrid to the frigid zone. The change has been too great for me; from being continually engaged in some exercise immediately connected with religion, besides preaching once or twice a day, to the most active description of bustling

through the world &c., it nearly chilled my soul to death. I am not much surprised that *eternal things* are so little valued. People will not take time to consider their importance: present things press with such violence upon them, that to avoid present *evil*, the future loses its horror, and to secure present good, that which is future and eternal is entirely forgotten. A person remarked to me the other day, that the rich Methodists were very worldly, or they would not suffer a preacher to stop for want of the loan of a little money. But my mind passes through second *causes*; Jehovah governs the world; therefore I submit, and will for ever be silent; because in mine own heart I must acquit the Lord! Farewell, J. J."

I have always considered, that attention to the children of God's people is a most important duty of the ministers of Christ. When in Dublin, this subject pressed much on my mind. How to devise, and carry forward, such a plan of catechetical instruction as would meet the demands of our people, cost me much thought. By prayer, advice, and experiment, such a plan was adopted and brought into such full operation, as I never saw in any other place in the same perfection.

We invited our friends to send all their children to Whitefriar-street chapel, Sabbath mornings, at ten o'clock. Those who came, we formed into male and female classes, which were met by a goodly company of our most eligible and respectable young men and women. They were principally instructed from the Scriptures—the mode, left generally to the catechists, who were regularly met by the preachers; who also superintended the whole institution, and, preached to them suitable sermons once a month. The sermon, at least, was continued for several years.

The religious excitement which raised the congregation in Cork-street, took place in a singular way. A good man, one of our leaders, had been placed under a sort of

suspension, which lay heavy on him for a season. At length he began to speak to the people in that neighbourhood, and hold prayer meetings, to which Protestants and Romanists repaired, and began to feel the sacred influence. When he found this was the case, he came and informed me how he had acted, and invited us to go there and preach. We did so, and I formed a class, to which the man who sought them out in the wilderness, was appointed leader. This circumstance ultimately led to the building of Cork-street chapel.

Another year rolled round, filled with labours, and crowned with mercies. The breakfast meeting, New-year's morning, 1808, was a season peculiarly blessed. Perhaps three hundred friends and brethren were assembled on the occasion ; among them were Dr. Stopford of the College, and his amiable lady. He said to me that it reminded him of the first Christians, and the upper room in Jerusalem.

Here it was that our old friend Mr. Ayckbowm started the first idea of the Old Men's Asylum, which was afterwards brought to maturity, though not exclusively by the Methodists, like the Widow's Alms-house. Mr. Ayckbowm's remarks, on that occasion, were affectingly true. " We have," he said, " our day-school, our female orphan school, &c. our poor fund for those who need relief in our Society, our stranger's friend society, our widow's house, &c. ; but an asylum for old men, is still wanting to perfect our labours of love. An aged man, who has survived his dearest relatives, and become feeble and dependant, is much more to be pitied than even an aged matron, who can knit a stocking, nurse a child, order a house, and many little matters, to make out life, and render herself useful ; but an old man can do little when past regular labour, but sit down, sigh, and say, ' my children are scattered, the partner of my life is dead, and what

have I now left to cheer the remainder of my pilgrimage ?" &c. This speech made a deep impression.

At the close of January, I received a curious anonymous letter, enclosing a *thirty-shilling note*, with a particular and pathetic address, entreating me, if possible, to make a feast for the wretchedly poor, suggesting the probability of my being accommodated with our Alms-house for that purpose. This was certainly agreeable to my own mind, yet I found difficulties that I did not expect, for I could not obtain either the Alms-house or school-room, for the purpose ; my own house was not the most suitable, and my wife appeared very near the time of her confinement. We resolved, however, to make the trial, and we accomplished the design of the pious donor, much to our own satisfaction. Having procured plenty of beef, &c., and made all things ready, I prepared a number of tickets, specifying the hour of dinner, and the place where it was provided ; these I gave to John Savage, our book-porter, who knew well all the streets and lanes in the city ; with an unlimited commission, as far as the tickets went. The hour arrived, and the guests came—"the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind"—and all were made welcome. Mr. M'Mullen and I carved—my wife and others attended. The company wondered, and ate heartily. We talked to them of the love of Jesus to the most wretched of the poor : of the heaven prepared for Lazarus, &c., and then we spoke very plainly, and without offence, of the sins and ingratitude of the indigent. They listened, and were much softened. None were more singularly astonished, than a forlorn old gentleman, who, when he received a mug of small beer, with which they were all served, seemed to forget all his misery, and most politely drank the health of the company. After an address, suitable to the occasion, they were dismissed, all, I believe, truly thankful.

The following letters will show the continued blessing which attended the zealous and indefatigable labours of our Irish Missionaries.

From Mr. Ousley.—Ballina, January 12.

“Very dear brother Lanktree,—Since my illness, last September, which continued about seven weeks, I have not written to my friends. Thanks be to my God that I was a little afflicted, I have since been healthy. I am now going on with spirit, and great comfort. Happy am I to tell, that the good work is prospering in our hands. All glory to Him to whom it belongs! The most atrocious sinners are brought to the feet of our Redeemer. One instance is a serjeant-major belonging to the Waterford militia, who was enough to make the streets tremble by his blasphemies, but lately, ‘mercy has his heart subdued;’ and now, meek as a child, he holds on his way, weeping and rejoicing, reading and praying.

“Lately, another wonderful conversion has taken place. The subject of it is a superannuated serjeant-major of the same regiment. It is rather the loss of his sight that has rendered him unfit for his office—a fine venerable-looking man, upwards of six feet high. This man was a proverb for wickedness, drunkenness, &c. His wife has been for a long time a remarkably pious woman, whom he most cordially despised for her godliness, and greatly persecuted. But O, how merciful is God! Having lost his sight, he came to amuse himself, as he called it, to hear a sermon; but he returned, saying, Who can bear these fellows? they speak too hard. Yet he came again, and again, and at length became a constant hearer. At one of the meetings, as the people were going out, I sung a few verses:—

‘Sinners, why stand ye idle, while we do march along?

Has conscience never told you, that ye were going wrong?’

He was greatly moved. He thought I meant it all for himself. Then he that leads him, being a pious man, procured Alleine's Alarm, and read it to him. He was much struck, especially with the form of the covenant. He judged with himself, he would never be fit to go to the sacrament, until he could heartily subscribe that covenant. On the night before New-year's day, he had an awful dream. Among other things, he thought he descended into a dark gloomy place, but at length began to see a gleam of light, and suddenly, a great door opening, he saw hell uncovered, and countless numbers of his fellow-creatures in the midst of the burning flame, and tortured with indescribable tortures. He awoke affrighted, and as if his heart would break, muttering to himself, 'God, God, be merciful to me!' He heard me preach on New-year's night, on, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? but he answering, said unto him, not so, Lord, let it alone this year also.' The subject was much blessed; we had a great stir, and for the first time in his life, the penitential tears began to flow. I invited all who would stay to renew the covenant. He stayed, and heartily joined with us. Again we had the presence of the Lord very powerfully. I then invited all that would, to come to class on Sabbath morning, and he came among others. They had a blessed time. His unfeigned humiliation and earnestness, had a powerful effect on the whole house, which still more deeply affected him. He threw himself on his knees again, most humbly, to give himself to his Lord Jesus Christ. Last Sabbath, being called on by the leader, he publicly prayed in the class; and is going on his way rejoicing. He says now, his sons must turn to God; little does he know that 'old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon!'

"Hallelujah! more and more are coming in to our Redeemer, in both the town and country. To encourage

family prayer, I give you a happy instance of its effects. I was at one of our country places a few nights ago, where they are beginning to keep up this blessed duty. On the Tuesday before, while at prayer, the cloud of the Lord's gracious presence overshadowed and overwhelmed them; a mighty cry arose among them, and one young woman was most blessedly filled with a sense of God's pardoning love, and then began to cry unto the rest, to seek and they should find. An old sickly mother, with other of the villagers who came in, was greatly moved. Praises to God!

"I preached here in the market yesterday, and in the country last night, and was much helped from above, but am quite hoarse to-day.....I laid before them the case of the Jews; how tenacious of their own commandments, or traditions, and how regardless of the commandments of God, and brought down this practice to the present day. How careful the Romish Priests are of the commandments of the church, the keeping of which makes for their own honour or profit; and how mad they are when they are broken; but how easy do they take it when the laws of God are daily broken! which fully proves it is not for God or their salvation they are acting, but for themselves. While I was thus arguing in the Irish language, one said, 'Tis surely all true; and we will believe no man to the contrary.' I hope a breach will at length be made through those adamantine walls. O Lord, hasten it!

"If you would mention in Gravel-walk preaching-house of the conversion of a serjeant-major or two here, to induce the soldiers to come out, it might be that a smooth stone might sink into Goliath's face, while yet you are reading. God grant it may reach their hearts!

"P. S.—I am told that this very old man, Serjeant Longmore, was the person that enlisted Mr. Smith."

The following is a continuation of the same delightful subject, from a full heart, and by the same hand.

Dated Grangemore, Feb. 8, 1808.

“ Your kind and very welcome favour per Mr. Molloy, came safe to hand. We thank you, indeed, for your tender concern, and kind attention to our affairs—with the gracious treasure you have sent us, to help to overthrow the powers of darkness.

“ I rejoice to hear of the welfare and prosperity of you and my dear Dublin brethren, and your families, and of the work of God in which you are engaged. I hope this will be a blessed year—a year of the increase of grace as well as members.

“ You inform us of three thousand souls being brought to God in one American meeting. Hallelujah! And of thousands of professing Christians being discovered in the East, uncorrupted by Popery, that so often well-nigh breaks my heart.

“ If my brethren would send me, I would be willing to go and die there. Perhaps Major Ousley would open my way. He has great interest, and knowledge of the place, and influence there. O that the great Lord of heaven and earth, and all things, would condescend to open the flood-gates of his mercy, and pour down rivers upon our congregations in this kingdom also! Blessed be his name, we are not without witness, that he approves our little endeavours through the land! I saw a letter last week from brother Peacock, saying, that their last quarter meeting in a place called Miltown, County Kerry, lasted from Friday to the Tuesday following. The Lord’s power among them was very great. This is, I think, the first thing of the kind of such long continuance which has appeared in our day in Ireland.

“ By letters from brothers Bell and John Hamilton, we

have good news, from the latter especially. Brother Tobias is all on fire also. Brother Hamilton mentions one Society, near the Giant's Causeway, which is increased from a few to one hundred members. The Lord is blessing them in Castlebar, especially the soldiers—the Antrim militia—several of whom have lately joined Society.

“ Whilst in Cavan, I preached twice in the Barrack, many of the men and their wives being Romanists. The melting power of God appeared among us—we all wept together. Another young Romanist, instantly after preaching, went to borrow a Bible, and could scarce sleep all night. Three Romanists, also, have been lately awakened, and joined our Society here: one of them is a man of good understanding, and some reading. Having seen one of the men, who had been very wicked before, weeping in his lodging and praying to God, he came to see and hear what kind of preaching must this be, against which he heard so much. He came again and again; sought the Lord, and found salvation. His wife had been a Presbyterian, married him some years ago, and went to Mass with him; for, as she told me, she had no comfort as she was, nor could she find any in the Mass either; so she thought she could never get any. But when her husband received mercy, he told her that she was all wrong, and he too, till then. She was alarmed at what he said to her; but he took the Bible which he had got, and read a chapter for her; while he was yet reading, her heart of stone gave way, and she was deeply and greatly agitated. He bid her look to Christ, and hope in him; when, in a few moments, the Lord revealed his pardoning love to her heart. Her joy was inexpressible. She after that came to hear for herself, and one night about a week ago, she stood up in the congregation, and with floods of tears, told what the Lord had done for her soul. She

spoke about fifteen minutes, and we all wept and rejoiced together. Among many other things, she told us that once, in the distress of her soul, she said to the Priest, I fear I am not right at all; I am going astray: but he bid her not be afraid. 'But now,' said she, 'I am in heaven; my soul is happy, happy.'

"The old serjeant-major has last week gone out about a mile from town, to pray with the people; and only on new-year's day last did he turn to God, after nearly three-score year's wickedness. We have had a great meeting in the church of a village called Easkey, and the presence of the Lord was with us. Glory be to his name! Two sermons were preached. We had a noise and a shaking on every hand: two souls acknowledged to have found peace, &c. My love to all the dear brethren, &c.

"Yours affectionately in the Lord,

"GIDEON OUSLEY."

On the twenty-seventh of April, I was called on to make the first public appeal on behalf of our Orphan School, the design of which, with a short biographical reference to its founder, Mr. Solomon Walker, will afford a specimen of what may be accomplished, for the benefit of the destitute, by an industrious pious individual in private life, whose heart is prepared by divine grace for that purpose, and who faithfully follows where Providence directs, and furnishes the means.

Mr. Walker was for many years a member of the Methodist Society in Dublin, and to the end of his life their steady friend. The desire to glorify God by promoting the happiness of mankind, was in him a permanent spring of action. Hence he went about doing good. His delight was to visit the garret and cellar, relieving the distressed poor, not intimidated by the most loathsome cases of disease. And when ministering to their bodily wants, he was careful not to omit the opportunity of point-

ing them to the Lord Jesus. In this pursuit he was unwearied. Thirty years prior to his death, having become the founder of a society for the relief of the sick poor, in the parish wherein he lived, and another in the parish of St. Luke, both of which he zealously supported.

But that on which he had set his heart, was the establishment of *an asylum for destitute female orphan children*. For this he would willingly have abridged his income; but difficulties occurred to prevent the accomplishment of his desire during life. He prepared, however, according to his ability, and placed his affairs in such a training, that when the Lord should call him to a better world, his benevolent design should be accomplished.

He expressed a strong aversion to a lingering death, and the Lord gave him his desire. He had set his house in order, and made his will, bequeathing almost the whole of his property to this Institution, and was then suddenly removed from earth, by what the world would call accident. A fall from his horse deprived him of sensation in a moment, and introduced him into the joy of his Lord.

He left the interest of £2000, Government Stock, which secures in perpetuity £100 a year, together with £150 in cash, which was laid out, as the will directed, in providing beds, furniture, &c., for the school, and clothing for the children, at its commencement. He did not calculate, however, that this would be sufficient, but to make a good beginning—fully expecting that the zeal and benevolence of the Dublin Methodists would accomplish what he had begun. It was his particular order, that the school should be called, "*The Methodist Female Orphan School*," and that the children should regularly attend preaching in Whitefriar-street chapel, that they might have the claim of children on the pious and benevolent care of the ministers and congregation, under whose particular inspec-

tion they were to be educated. The great design of the Institution is, to open a door for as many as possible of those female orphan children, who should, at least, be deprived of one parent—to afford them a refuge from wretchedness, ignorance, idleness, and perhaps infamy and ruin, by training them to habits of industry, useful knowledge, purity of manners, and, above all, to an acquaintance with the Lord Jesus ;—to be a substitute for godly parents, and their pious education. Only eight children were then in the school. We had a noble collection, after which two more were added.

The Conference, 1808, commenced on the first of July. Some of the most gratifying of my duties, whilst in Dublin, was to provide for my brethren, when gathering together in the name of the Lord Jesus ; but this year the pleasure was heightened by some seasonable attentions to our President, Dr. Coke, and his devoted wife. Blessed be God for being permitted to promote the comfort of his honoured servant ! Mrs. Coke, in giving her parting benediction to my dear wife and myself, expressed a strong conviction that we would be greatly owned of God the coming year, which, through his abundant mercy, was verified.

When the appointments for the year were about to be fixed, I saw vast anxiety among many of my brethren : as it regarded myself, I endeavoured to cast my care upon the Lord, who had hitherto so graciously conducted my steps. The solemn injunction from the word of the Lord to *Baruch*, was deeply impressed upon my mind—"Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." I said to the Conference, "I am young, and willing to labour. I will not choose for myself. Send me where I shall have good congregations, and plenty of work, and I will go wherever you judge proper." I was accordingly appointed to labour in the North of Ireland, from whence I have never since been

removed. I was set down particularly for the Armagh circuit, with Mr. Kidd, who had travelled there the past year.

It was exceedingly trying to leave Dublin. The dear friends we were leaving were entwined around our hearts; from every report, we had a dreary prospect before us; but I had laid my hand to the plough, and dare not look back. We had now five little ones to convey with us; and the first day, on the road to Drogheda, we were completely drenched with incessant rain for several hours; but good brother and sister Stewart expected us, and, through their kind hospitality, we suffered no injury, and finally reached Armagh in perfect safety.

CHAPTER XIV.

1808-9-10-11.

THE Charlemont circuit had the city of Armagh as its centre, and preacher's residence, though the town of Charlemont, with the contiguous neighbouring town of Moy, was the heart of the circuit. The contrast between Dublin and Armagh, as the residence for the family of a preacher, was extremely great. In the latter, the preacher's house had scarcely any furniture, and was out of repair. There was no provision for the preacher to diet at home, the chapel was in a state of delapidation, and the Society had not many more individual members than there were hundreds in the one we left. These things were distressing to nature; but sometimes "hard beginnings are good omens."

My colleague, Mr. Kidd, who had laboured here the year before I came, appeared as if specially prepared by

the great Shepherd to comfort and assist me in the important work to which we had been appointed. I have met but few men to equal him in fitness for preaching, with powerful effect, "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." He was then in his meridian strength—friendly, affectionate, and zealous. We had a few valuable local preachers on the circuit, and a number of faithful leaders; in respect to mind, and solid friendship, John Noble, our general steward, was worthy of his name.

Taking the circuit as a whole, it was, for those days, sufficiently compact, intersecting the north end of the County Armagh, taking in Keady, Tynan, Killyleagh, and sundry places in the skirts of the Counties of Monaghan and Tyrone, Verner's-bridge, Loughall, Richhill, Market-hill, &c. It is curious to remark, that on the Carlow circuit, the general denomination for country places was *Coonen*; here it was *Derry*. These Derry's were small hills, which after heavy rains, appeared like numerous islands in a lake: on several of them we had Societies and preaching-places. After my two years' residence in Dublin, the city of Armagh, and the country round appeared very beautiful. "The fruitful fields smiled with abundance," and the numerous orchards abounded with fruit; but widely different was the state of society in general. The Diamond fights between the Romanists and Protestants, were still fresh in people's memory; and their minds painfully embittered against each other. Party-spirit had also produced a rent amongst the Methodists. The Kilhamites, so called, or New Connexion, had gotten a few Societies from us, and much want of temper was evinced;—I will not say, all on the one side.

In commencing our ministry in this populous country, two great objects were presented to our view—the edification of our Societies, and the extension of the work: and our God will bear witness, that we faithfully applied

ourselves for their attainment. First, by attention to our ordinary places ; preaching morning, evening, and noon-day ; meeting the Societies, instructing the children, &c. In addition to these imperative duties, we took every opportunity of preaching in the large market of Armagh, and of holding field-meetings in sundry noted parts of the country. In these attempts, we had abundant evidence that God was with us ; multitudes attended ; the great truths of the Gospel were affectingly brought home to the consciences of sinners ; the lukewarm were warned and the faithful encouraged. Here, also, the talents of our public characters were called into exercise, and all were concentrated in mighty effort, to bring souls to Christ. As a helper in these meetings, Mr. Kidd was, perhaps, unequalled—his fine, musical, commanding voice—his copious eloquence—the holy energy and unction by which he reached the hearts of the people—had here their full scope ; and he was unwearied in his exertions. Under the management of an adorable Providence, there was one circumstance which singularly prepared the people in several places to profit by my ministry ; this was the visit of Lorenzo Dow, some short time prior to my coming to the circuit. Here, also, his preaching was attended with the divine blessing. In his journals, which were widely distributed, he had gratefully mentioned my name, which created a prepossession in the public mind for Lorenzo's friend ; whilst the consolation which many derived from the Gospel, and the fruits of righteousness which appeared in them, to the praise and glory of God, afforded me an abundant compensation for the many troubles I endured on his account.*

To return to our field-meetings. At one of these, in the neighbourhood of Tullyroan, the power of God was

* Appendix, C.

gloriously manifested. After preaching, while we were singing with a lively hope,

“Haste again, ye days of grace!
When assembled in one place,
Signs and wonders mark’d the hour,
All were fill’d and spake with power,” &c.

A respectable young woman, who had for some time been earnestly seeking the knowledge of salvation, was so deeply affected, that she fell to the ground: at the same instant, a great part of the assembly, consisting of many hundreds, felt the sacred overwhelming influence, and prostrated themselves before the blessed God, in holy adoration. It was heaven opened upon earth, which, doubtless, many will remember with adoring gratitude through all eternity. At another of these meetings, where many penitents were brought to the enjoyment of pardon, a pious father had the satisfaction of seeing three of his children savingly converted to God; two of them were twins, who had been mourning after the blessing for several weeks;—they were both made happy almost at the same moment. The most extraordinary of these displays of redeeming power that I had ever witnessed, was near Cockhill, the residence of Mr. Lock, (where Mr. Wesley was entertained in his day, and seized with serious illness.) After Mr. Kidd had preached in an orchard, where the word of the Lord appeared for the time irresistible; we adjourned to a large empty house for prayer. Here the holy influence was so extraordinary, that Mr. Kidd and I could do little more than stand still, and witness the triumphs of redeeming love, over sin, earth, and hell. The stoutest men in the congregation, “trembling and astonished,” had fallen on the floor, crying for mercy; whilst others who had obtained heavenly consolation, were rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Among these was Harrison Lock. This

young man had been on his way to the public house, when he was met by a friend, who entreated him to come to the meeting; he yielded, and soon felt the arrows of the Almighty pierce his stubborn heart: when the prayer-meeting commenced, he retired behind the room door, and there pleaded with God for pardon: salvation came to his afflicted conscience, similar to that of the Philippian jailor; he rushed forward among the mourners, with heavenly joy beaming from his countenance, crying aloud, "Ye may all obtain mercy, for God has pardoned Harrison Lock." The effect was truly astonishing, particularly on the younger branches of Mr. Lock's family. His sister was seized with deep conviction, whom the father supported in his arms for some time, until she obtained consolation. Just then, a little lad, another member of the family, received a sense of the pardoning love of God, and burst forth into a transport of praise. I spent that night in Mr. Lock's; we continued in praise and prayer until morning. The happy results of the favoured season just referred to, could not be calculated: indeed, wherever these meetings were held, a hallowing influence was shed over the country, preparing the way of the Lord, reclaiming sinners, "turning the hearts of fathers to their children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just."

We were accustomed to preach in many places in the forenoon—one of these was Summer Island. On leaving the house, after preaching there, the mistress, a young woman of the name of Davis, one of those who had been lately awakened and blessed, came to the door, and most affectionately and solemnly said, "I hope you will not forget praying for me, for I am persuaded you will not see me alive on your return." She was then in a declining state of health. It was as she apprehended. She departed this life in the full triumph of faith. I preached her fu-

neral sermon from Isa. xl. 6—"All flesh is grass," to a crowded audience. As they were proceeding with the corpse to the burial ground, one man said to another, "Our neighbour is gone to heaven." "Aye," was the reply; "but where are you and I going?" Deep conviction sunk into their hearts; repentance unto life followed; prayer-meetings were established; God answered prayer, and a blessed revival commenced: the mantle of the departed believer seemed to fall upon many, who were roused from the death of sin to follow her in the path of life to heaven.

Whilst we were thus graciously favoured on the Charlemont circuit, I had a variety of most delightful accounts from Christian correspondents, of the extension of the kingdom of Christ, through the instrumentality of Methodism, in various other parts of the world. A selection of these, flowing familiarly, as they did, from the hearts of my beloved brethren and friends, discovering their labours, sufferings, and views in the common cause, must equally please and profit the pious reader.

A communication from Dublin informed me that there had been an increase the last year, in England, of 7,958 members.

Another observed—"Our preachers are blessed men, good speakers, sound in doctrine, and well liked. Their word is with power. Some sinners have been converted, backsliders healed, and the congregations in general are very large. Brother ——, as usual, keeping to his post. All that concerns him is the salvation of his own soul, and the conversion of sinners."

Mr. Averell addressed me from Dublin, Dec. 30—"I have just come here twenty-four hours after the death of my precious sister, Keene, who is to be buried on New-year's day, instead of attending the breakfast meeting. Wonderful has been the change on her soul for some time past, and she has left a most blessed testimony behind her.

that comforts us all in our affliction. Brother Keene bears his burden like a man of God indeed. My various concerns prevent my going to the North until about April. In laying out my plan, I will give you what time I can ; but Oh, my brother, who knoweth whether we shall ever meet ! My mind is much burdened, while I write by my sweet loving friend's remains. My brother in Christ, praised be God for your cheering account ! I am ever yours in the Lord."

The following is from Mr. William Hamilton, Aughrim March 22, truly characteristic of himself and his circumstances : happy in God, and happy in his work ; yea, glorying in tribulation. If any man, in the present day, be ready to murmur and draw back, let him think of his predecessors, " who loved not their lives unto death," and be ashamed.

" My dear old brother Lanktree—My good wife and I took a ride to Ballinasloe to-day, and there we got your letter. I was very glad to see your name on paper, for surely it is written on my heart in the deepest friendship. We write to our friends ; but many of our letters are not ' joyous, but grievous,' for such a year of persecution I never had. ' Cruel mockings' are nothing, and showers of stones and dirt are but play ; but ' bloodshed and battery' are no joke. Last Christmas we were way-laid, and robbed of our books. Ousley was hurt, and lost his hat in the fray : he had to ride seven miles before he got one. I thought we should never leave the spot. It happened near Eyrecourt, on the Shannon. We had preached there that day, and had a battle with the Priest and his people. The Priest beat my horse greatly ; and the people dragged him down on the street, and I on his back. But a soldier got me into the barrack yard. Ousley was hurt there too. The soldiers then got to arms, loaded their pieces, fixed their bayonets, marched out before us,

and formed a square about us both on the street, until we preached to the market people. They then put us safe out of the town, but never thought that our persecutors had got out before us, and lay concealed until we came up, and then surrounded us with horrid shoutings, as if Scullabogue barn had been on fire. At another time, a big Priest and I were in holds with each other, as he was going to pull my Ousley down: I could easily have injured him, for he was very drunk.

“ We have penetrated as far as Kilrush, looking over to the county Kerry. In several places we have a good prospect. Our circuit is near 200 miles round. Weary work for poor *me*—full of rheumatism, with which I was confined for some months after Conference, and I cannot look less than five years older than I appeared then. My dear brother Ousley is coming round from the county Clare. We have divided for some time past. * * * We have no wonderful work this year, as we had about Ballina. We are very glad that we are alive, and the winter over. We have, indeed, a few places opened for preaching, that, I hope, will lead to a good and lasting work. I went to church last Sabbath, near Castle-Bleakney; after service, I stood up at the door, and began singing, then explained a part of the Apostles’ Creed. A man invited me to his house when I had done. We are glad to get a single family to stop in, and sometimes we are turned out late in the evening. This requires patience, and should make you and the like of you very thankful. We heard that your fat KIDD was dead. I am very glad to hear that it is not so; but it is *before him*. Lord make him meet for that wonderful change!

“ I rejoice in your zeal respecting large field-meetings. O, that is the way, my dear brother! Climb the hills, and cry aloud. I could weep for joy at the thought, and would be with you if I could.

“The accounts I have from all the circuits about me are of a pleasing kind. My candle is done, and it is just eleven o'clock; so I wish you all good night.

“P. S.—I have slept a little, and thought of another thing to tell you. A Mr. L——, clergyman of the church near Corrofin, county Clare, has been so *Walkerized*, that he left the church about three months ago, and sits in a gentleman's house, who is of the same mind, teaching his children; and a few of them have their little church together in the parlour. We spent a night there among them, and a sore night it was with contentions. In the church of Gort, there is nothing sung but hymns and hymn tunes. Dean Foster's is one of our lodging places.”

The following is from Mr. Ousley, on the same subject, and in the same sweet spirit. Dated Aughrim, April 5th, 1809.

“A few nights ago, my dear brother Lanktree's letter was read by my sick bedside, where I lay very ill, indeed, after my return from the county Clare end of our circuit. I rejoiced at your prosperity in Christ, and have no doubt but his blessed work will still prosper in your hands. * * * I shall tell you what is in my heart. From the first day I saw you, my heart became united to you, and you became dear to me: nor from that time until now did I ever see any reason to change my affection, or withdraw it from you. O may this heavenly union of friendship and love go forward increasingly, until we shall meet before the throne! Amen, amen.

“I know you are anxious to hear, as to my illness, &c. During the year, I had not before this one day's sickness. My health was very good: but the night before I came home, I lay in a room, the floor of which was very damp and wet; so I got a double disorder—a heavy cold and ague. On Friday, through mercy, I got a little change

for the better, and have been recovering since. Now I get up; and you see, thanks to our God, I can write to a friend, and hope soon to be at my Master's work again.

"And now, as to our circuit. But I must first cast my longing eyes on yours. How pleasant, my brother, to range through meadows fair, and fields productive of crops in various states or stages, ready to make the tiller's heart to dance; where there are meandering crystal streams and sweet fruits clustering all around! But to have the huge rocks, hard as adamant; wild deserts, where savage beasts seek their prey, and scarcely a green herb, or spring, or fruit is found; how dreary is the sight! When the poor traveller does not know where to rest his weary head—how dismal the contrast! This is our case. Yet glory to God, my brother, the Lord came with us; and then 'labour is rest, and pain is sweet.' Some of the solitary places are becoming glad; the desert begins to sing and blossom as the rose. Friendship and good-will are beginning to appear. We have now from twenty-four to thirty places to call and lodge; and in two classes, for which we have got leaders, there are in both about sixty or seventy members, with a prospect of more. My friends there will be glad to hear that I am alive—alive to live for ever!—Hallelujah!"

The Rev. Peter Roe, Kilkenny, favoured me with the following account of the state of religion in that city. Since its date, the number of pious and laborious clergymen belonging to the Established Church are, no doubt, vastly increased. May they be multiplied a thousand fold! It is dated April 26.

"My dear Friend—I was much gratified to learn from your letter, that you and my good friend, Mrs. Lanktree, with your little ones, were in health. May the God of mercy continue to you this valuable and desirable blessing, and sanctify it to you by his grace. How insensible are

we to the daily mercies we receive, and how prone to look to and depend on the creature! Oh that our souls may be as a weaned child; and that we may live by faith, and not by sight! This is the only true, the only happy way of living; when every thought and every desire bows to Jesus—when he is enthroned in the heart and affections—when he is known to be the first and the last, the Author and Finisher of faith. Then the soul is full of peace and joy—a peace that passeth understanding—a joy that will never end.

“From my heart I rejoice that the truth is spreading where you are, and that the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ is known and prized by so many. May his kingdom come, and be set up daily in many hearts; and may all who profess to know him, be found faithful unto death, that they may receive the crown of life!

“The word of God is quick and powerful; and when preached in simplicity and godly sincerity, it will reach the hearts of sinners. Jehovah says it shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it.

“Blessed be God, his work is still going on here and prospering. Now and then we behold a brand plucked from the burning, and are encouraged to look forward to bright and happy days. All the friends you know are well, and I hope steady, though living like us all beneath our privilege. We have the Cavan militia here, and, I trust, and am led to believe, that some of them will have reason to praise God eternally for being quartered in this city. I lecture twice a week in the barrack, and have a numerous and attentive auditory. The officers hear with constancy—some in the week days, all at noon service on the Sabbath, and several in the evening. The major (Woodward) is an excellent man. The men seem very anxious for the Scriptures, and have purchased a great number of

Bibles and Testaments. I trust the fire will burn, and the flame spread among them.

“The Rev. Mr. Madden, who was married to a daughter of the bishop, died triumphantly on the first of January. I never saw any thing to exceed the change that grace made in his mind—his patience, humility, and victory over the world. His joy and peace were truly astonishing, and the admiration of all who were with him. In him I saw those words of our Lord fully verified—‘The last shall be first.’ Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Should you have any thing in particular at any time to communicate, let me hear from you; I assure you it will always afford me pleasure. My Mary Ann is thankful for Mrs. L.’s kind remembrance, and begs her love in return. We had two little ones—one gone to glory, the other doing well.”

Believe me to be, my dear Friend,

Your’s truly in Christ Jesus.”

As early as November, 1808, we instituted an association for the occasional relief of sick poor, and distressed strangers in the city of Armagh. The beginning was small, having arisen from a conversation on the subject between Mr. Noble and my wife. They agreed to join their pennies weekly, and form a commencement. Suitable rules were then drawn up, and laid before the public, which were so well received as to meet universal support. Cases were carefully investigated; faithful visitors appointed to report upon them in an open meeting, after preaching, on Sabbath evenings. This plan had a powerful influence on the public, removing prejudice, and exciting a spirit of benevolence and liberality. Many were induced to hear the word, and a happy feeling of peace and good-will was diffused over the community.

Before the Conference, we were able to repair the

chapel and dwelling-house ; at the close of our *ministerial* year, we returned 835 members, many of whom were savingly converted to God : we had sufficient work for a third preacher, with several advantages for extending it on all sides. Blessed be God !

My attendance on the annual assembly of my brethren, July, 1809, was exceedingly delightful. I journeyed as far as my native place, with Messrs. Alexander Moore and Kidd. The weather was fine. All nature was charming, and our souls happy. My brethren were excellent singers, and as we travelled on horseback, by private roads, to avoid dust and enjoy each others society, the mountains and vales were made to resound with the name of Jesus. When we arrived at the hospitable mansion of my dear old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Henry, Oldcastle, we were joined by seven more brethren, but they would not allow any of us to be accommodated in any other place during the night. Next morning, as we rode together, we contrived to conduct an important conversation, for our mutual benefit as ministers of Christ, and how we could most effectually carry on the great work in which we were engaged, which was continued during the day, excepting when we stopped for refreshment, or sang hymns to give expression to our happy feelings. Our plan was, for four or five to ride abreast, having Mr. Kidd as a telegraph between the front and rear ranks ; the passing scenes were thus rendered doubly delightful. At Foxbrook, we had another hospitable reception, where five of us remained during the night.

When we arrived in the city I was greatly humbled, I might say overwhelmed, by the love of my dear friends. The most striking feature of this Conference was, the accession of promising young men, which we agreed to place on our reserve list ; four of whom, viz., George Burrows, Edward Johnston, William Reilly, and Arthur Noble,

are honourably bearing the heat and burden of the present day.

My lot was to return to the Charlemont circuit, with Messrs. Archibald Campbell and Richard Price; the former a plain preacher, with a large family, which was settled in Moy; the latter a very pious promising young man, with a most benevolent disposition, but tender constitution.

Added to the multiplied labours of our enlarged circuit, I had now, with the *permission* of Conference, to procure money by subscription, to redeem and finish our chapel in Moy; to rebuild Clanmain preaching-house, which had fallen into decay; and build a chapel in Tullyroan, about one mile distant from it. This induced me to travel and preach in different circuits. By perseverance the work was accomplished, though it necessarily kept me long from home, and too much from the proper spiritual work of my own circuit. It was in many respects a trying and painful year to my mind, yet still the vigorous impulse which had been felt the last year was not greatly diminished, and we were prepared to divide the circuit, and make provision for four preachers at the ensuing Conference.

One pleasing accession to our number of respectable preaching places, was that of Mr. Langtry's, of Belview, near Richhill. I was most kindly invited there: in that lovely family every facility was afforded for preaching, and the tenderest hospitality shown to myself and brethren: the result was, the union of several of the young ladies to our Society. As summer approached, I again visited my relatives in Oldcastle, and took part in a great field-meeting beside Ballyjamesduff; it was a solemn time, but there was nothing extraordinary, excepting the happy meeting with many old friends for the last time on earth.

On my return, I preached to a large congregation in Monaghan, where I had a gracious season, and once more took sweet counsel with Mr. Kidd, who had come there for that purpose. In his written communications with me, respecting his labours on the Coleraine circuit, an extract or two will afford a view of the man and his communication.

“The morning meetings were an agreeable surprise to the people in this country. Some have asked me if I never tire, and expressed their fears that so much preaching will kill me! After morning preaching I meet and instruct the children. My plan of operations in the town of Coleraine is, to preach on Saturday’s in the market—Lord’s day I preach at eight in the morning, meet the children at half-past ten, at one preach abroad, while the season admits, and in the chapel at five in the evening. Yesterday I preached in front of the jail; it was truly gratifying and affecting to see the poor prisoners with their heads stuck up to the grates, listening with profound attention. When I had done, they shouted their thanks, and prayed for blessings on me.

“My dear friend, I continue to feel the Saviour’s love, and was never more determined to live to him, to serve him in his members, and minister his Gospel to sinners of mankind.

“Many here speak of having been edified by the piety of brother Tobias. When eating his victuals, and on other occasions, silent tears have flowed from his eyes, and ejaculations, expressive of confidence and love to God, from his lips. I tell you this, because I know you will enjoy it.”

From such a man, labouring as he did, it were but natural to expect what follows in his next letter:—

“In Coleraine, we have had one of the most happy love-feasts I ever witnessed. Believers were unusually filled

with heaven, and others brought into a sweetly penitent state. In going round the circuit, we found that some happy effects had followed from all our meetings. Indeed there is scarcely a week in which the Saviour does not gather some of the fruits of his passion; and to teach us poor 'tinkling symbols' how little he is indebted to us, conversions frequently take place when neither of us are present, and sometimes in places where we have never been. Still the work of God is carried on, and therein do I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. I feel my mind quickened in the heavenly way, and trust I enjoy increasing love to God and his people."

About the same time, I had another communication from the Rev. B. Caldwell, Sligo, saying, "The cause of our adorable Immanuel is reviving here; glory to God in the highest! I believe the preachers who have been appointed here are men of God.* The last field-meetings and quarterly love-feasts have been attended with much of the Divine presence. Our communion Sabbath was a blessed day to many. Oh, if a day, or a few hours, spent in the service of Jesus here be so sweet, what must it be to bask forever in the light of his countenance!

"I think you have expressed a wish in some of your letters, that I should say something respecting the best method of serving the church of God in general, and promoting Zion's prosperity. We might, in the first place, observe, that there are some hindrances in the way, impeding its progress. I heard a preacher making the following remark from the pulpit, that the grand hindrance to the work of God is, that many who hold the office of public teachers, are defective in faith, in zeal, in love and in that divine unction which teacheth all things; and that among the hearers, many neglect to mix faith with the

* These were Messrs. David Campbell and James Peacock.

word preached. This is very agreeable to my views of the matter. The consideration of which humbles me in the dust.

Again, I think, the education of children is a means in the hand of the Lord to promote the above end. There ought to be some *standing rule* formed, upon which we could act upon every occasion. We ought to renew the old method of familiar instruction. The principles and doctrines of religion should be for those of maturer age, as well as the youth. The bare hearing of sermons is not sufficient."

The following extract of a letter from my precious brother, John Joyce, is too important not to have a place in this Narrative. It is dated Philadelphia, June 3d, 1810.

"My ever dear Brother—Though unworthy the notice of any of God's people, yet I feel anxious to live in the remembrance of those with whom I once enjoyed fellowship in the Gospel of Christ. The hours I spent with you are in the recollection refreshing to my spirit; and I look forward with gratitude and hope to that world where distance or separation shall be no more; but, safe in Jesus, we shall be one for ever.

"I am now two years and eight months in America; and in the course of that time have travelled probably ten thousand miles, and preached in many cities—blessed be God, not wholly in vain! The first winter I spent in UTICA, in the back part of the State of New-York. There I enjoyed a refreshing season, indeed. About one hundred souls gave evidence that they were born from above. * * *

"Perhaps you have not heard, that shortly after we were settled in Utica, we lost our all by fire. Three thousand miles from friends or home, we were left without a shilling! Blessed be God that I was not cast where

I deserved to be, in the flame that shall never be quenched ! Sometimes I have been left without a dollar ; and I trust I know a little of the sweetness of casting my care upon the Lord. Do you know that I have sometimes doubted if there were not more happiness to be enjoyed when, in the dispensations of unerring wisdom, we are obliged to live by faith for our daily supplies, than when the cellar is stored, and the barn full. O, how full of consolation is that word of Incarnate Love—‘ the very hairs of your head, they are all numbered ! ’

“ I have been reduced also by sickness. I spent two winters in Utica, where the cold is intense. For the last nine months, I have enjoyed comfortable health, and am enabled to go through my ministerial labours without oppressive fatigue.”

“ You inquire—1st, ‘ How is the Lord’s work prospering ? ’ I answer, in a glorious manner. The Presbyterians are very numerous, and have many able and faithful ministers. Through the New-England States, they are mostly Congregationalists. Within the last five years, tens of thousands have been converted there. I shall mention a remarkable circumstance which occurred among them in Litchfield, Connecticut. In Mr. Whitfield’s day, the church in that town refused to open the meeting-house to him, and passed an act to exclude any member that should go to hear him, or any who preached in connexion with him. From that time until the June of 1808, there never was known to be a soul converted there. At that time, the last member of the church died ; and very shortly after, it pleased God to pour out his Spirit on the inhabitants of the town, so that, in a short period, hundreds were turned from darkness to light. How wonderful are the ways of God ! Surely his judgments are a great deep !

“ The Methodists are numerous, especially in the

Southern States. They are zealous, laborious, and very useful. They penetrate the woods, cross the mountains, and make the vales resound with warnings to sinners. As far as I know, the Baptists are as numerous as the Methodists. They resemble them very much. They dwell on experimental religion, and their line of labour is much the same, which sometimes produces irritation, and collision produces heat. In point of talent, I judge that the ministry of the Methodist body exceeds the Baptists. The Episcopalians are pretty much the same all over the world. In this city the Quakers are numerous, and have some Gospel preachers among them. On the whole, I think religion is gloriously advancing in this nation. Here is the noblest field for Gospel labours. Perhaps thousands of congregations vacant, and calling for the word of life.

“Missionary Societies are numerous and increasing. A Bible Society has been instituted in this city. They have ordered a complete set of stereotype, so that they will be able to supply the various Societies which are forming in the other States. All parties unite in this object.

“2. ‘Is your soul happy through an increase of the favour and image of God?’

“I need not inform you, my brother, that, prior to my leaving Ireland, my soul had declined much in divine things. Prosperity injured me. I grew proud, self-sufficient, and quite impatient of contradiction. Your affection prevented you from pointing out with *sufficient* severity my fault and danger. However, with tears of gratitude to the God of grace, I acknowledge my sin. He humbled me. The method was severe; but nothing else would reach the depth of my disease. I have sunk low. At present, though weak and worthless in myself, I value the Lord Jesus more than ever—I feel my perishing need of him—I trust my soul and all my immortal

concerns to him—my heaven is to view the glory of his cross; and when favoured to view the glory of God as it shines in his face, my mounting soul exults, ‘and, as a bounding hart, flies home.’ O, how good is God! Glory to his name! Do you remember the sweet hour we spent with our Lord, in Mr. Henry’s summer-house, Oldcastle? ‘I saw thee under the fig-tree—thou shalt see greater things than these.’ Yes, we shall see Him **AS HE IS**.

“3. ‘Are you fully persuaded you are in your providential place and employment?’ I am at present in this city, and preach in the Independent tabernacle. I have been here for eight months. The providence was very evident by which I was conducted here, and unless I see my way as plain to leave it, I dare not move. I have no employment but to preach the Lord who bought me, and serve the interests of his church. May his Spirit baptize me more fully for the heavenly employment!

4. “‘Are you closely connected with the Methodists in heart and labours?’ I love them as a people—with many of them I am connected in heart and affection; and our labours are, I trust, directed to the same supreme object, the glory of God in the salvation of souls; but in the means by which that object is to be effected, I have been led, I trust, with an honest heart, to differ from them.

* * * I believe I am willing to follow truth. I see difficulties on all hands. I hear ignorance speak with confidence, where an apostle was silent. On the subject of divine grace, I have listened to you with pleasure; for, indeed, I know no man more in the habit of ascribing all that is good in the creature to God, at the same time that you lay the blame of all that is evil to the creature.

* * * * Pray for me. May the God of all grace be with you and your’s for ever. Amen!”

At the Conference, 1810, Mr. Averell was president. We had a general increase of nearly two thousand mem-

bers. In our address to the English brethren, the state of our Irish connexion is thus expressed—

“ Arrived at this period, we look back with hearts deeply affected with gratitude to the God of our mercies for his goodness eminently exercised towards us the past year. None of our preachers have died; and, notwithstanding the painful exercises and afflictions of some of our dear brethren, having obtained help of God, we continue to this day. But that, above all, which demands and excites our praise is this, that the great Head of the church has blessed our labours. Our Conference has been one of the most blessed we have ever known. There is but one common sentiment prevails among us, and that is love to God, his church, and each other.”

The circuit on which I had now laboured for two years was divided, and, with the addition of two or three small Societies, was formed into the Charlemont and Armagh circuits. To the latter I was appointed with Mr. Samuel Harpur. This amiable young man was a good preacher, and combined in his character much of the Christian and gentleman. We loved each other, and laboured harmoniously together. We felt that God was with us. We held our large meetings, and pursued our ordinary work. I preached as usual in the street, and Armagh Society and congregation increased considerably, as well as the circuit.

Dr. Coke having declined being our President this year, our countryman Dr. Clarke was appointed to that office by the British Conference; and this appointment was the commencement of a new era in Irish Methodism. For several years, we had but scanty intercourse with our English brethren, conducted almost exclusively by Dr. Coke, as our President, and Mr. Averell as our Representative. From this period, our Christian intercourse has been gradually extended, with increasing affection, confidence, and advantage, at least to our connexion.

Dr. Clarke was most desirous to visit his native country, and minister to our congregations; yet were we nearly deprived of that advantage, even after his appointment, through the mistaken zeal of some of our Irish preachers, for Dr. Coke's reputation. Dr. Clarke's invaluable Commentary, which now began to be published, was most eagerly and generally subscribed for by our people. In his Introduction to the Commentary, he was thought to have been severe in his strictures on Dr. Coke's work, which he considered "little more than a re-print of Dr. Dodd's Bible." Dr. Coke's Bible had a most extended sale amongst us, and was greatly esteemed. Several brethren did not know how to account for Dr. Clarke's remarks, and wrote and spoke too freely on the subject.

Dr. Clarke, in reply to a gentleman who had written to him on the subject, a copy of which I obtained, explained, very faithfully, what led to his notice of Dr. Coke's work, and mentions his intention of withdrawing from his intended visit. His objections were, however, overruled, and he came to Ireland, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Joseph Butterworth, Esq., and his son. We were favoured with a sermon from the Doctor on that occasion, in Armagh. The large Presbyterian meeting-house was obligingly opened to us, and the Doctor preached to a numerous audience, from 1 Thess. v. 16, 17, 18. The *germ* of his sermon is in his note on that passage, which he explained, expounded, and enforced, with great unction and power. I availed myself, also, of the privilege of hearing him in Charlemont and Portadown, where I dare say, some thousands attended his ministrations. In the latter place, a large company of friends were invited to tea. Contrary to the Doctor's custom, he joined the company, though he would not partake of the beverage, and was led to speak on an important theme, which was most gratifying to the whole com-

pany ; namely, the leading doctrines of Methodism—their connexion with experimental religion—with the direct tendency of our whole economy to promote holiness and happiness among ourselves, and diffuse the same felicity over the habitable world.

On a review of my three years' labours in this country, I see much for which to glorify the God of my life. Whosoever planted or watered, it was " God who gave the increase," who alone is worthy of the praise. For my own part, I had constant labour, and some sufferings, but grace was given, and deliverance effected. The way and manner will be known in the day of Christ. That which is best calculated to glorify God by its publicity, may more seasonably be resumed at another opportunity.

CHAPTER XV.

1811-12-13.

THE Conference, 1811, was exceedingly important. The examination of characters was conducted with great strictness. Our doctrines, discipline, and ministry, after a lucid explanation of them by our President, were faithfully, " as in the sight of God," brought home to the bosom and business of every preacher.

We had a general increase, though not equal to the former year. As it was found that, with all our attention to public and private economy, we were becoming every year more deeply involved in debt, another taxation of the preachers was proposed, being the only expedient to meet present difficulties, which accordingly took place, at £4, and upwards, each man, amounting to £589.

The subject of the increasing deficiencies of our Irish Connexion, had become a matter of serious investigation among a number of respectable friends who were at this time in Dublin, in which Mr. Butterworth took a most lively interest. Unsolicited and unthought of by the preachers, the business was taken up and discussed, an address prepared, and a subscription commenced, towards liquidating the Conference debt. This was signed by the Dublin leaders, with several other influential friends, and sent through all the circuits in Ireland. One of its concluding remarks must be felt and acted on in the true spirit of Christianity, if we expect to see Methodism prosper, according to the great purpose of our Lord. "The preachers themselves have borne their difficulties in secret, and silently submitted to their numerous privations. But their embarrassments must necessarily depress the work; for how can a preacher properly pursue his private studies, and go on with spirit in his public ministry, whose family is in circumstances of distress and want?"

At a select meeting of preachers and friends, Mr. Butterworth, at Dr. Clarke's suggestion, gave an accurate account of the manner in which Lord Sidmouth's bill, which would have so ruinously affected Methodism, was overthrown. In this deliverance, Mr. Butterworth was made an effectual instrument in the hands of Providence. The defeat of that bill discovered most clearly how little God's people, or any part of God's family, are aware how many enemies may be privately contriving their ruin; they know as little the instruments through which it may please God to effect their deliverance. But we may rest in the faithful promise of Jehovah, that while we abide in his counsel, "no weapon formed against us shall prosper; and every tongue rising against us in judgment, shall be condemned."

During this Conference, there was an animated and

lengthened debate on the subject of stationing the preachers. This subject had created considerable discontent, especially under the increasing embarrassments of the Connexion. It was now openly and warmly debated. The matter was not set at rest, but some advantage was gained in the equalization of the stations for the year. My reference to this subject is in the spirit of candour and truth; for, although I was not of those who complained, as it regarded myself, having had, both before and after this Conference, a tolerably fair proportion of rough and smooth, I was convinced that there was but too much cause for uneasiness and complaint; and that next to our proper personal call to the work of the ministry, nothing should more deeply concern us before God, than *where* that ministry should be exercised; and, of consequence, self-seeking, and management, and getting up petitions, should be sacrificed to the will of our great Master, in promoting the end of our itinerant labours, the edification of his people, and the salvation of the world. These were my sentiments then, and they are the same this day. My appointment was confirmed for the Londonderry circuit, with Mr. Samuel Alcorn.

On Saturday, July 7th, I reached my destination, with my increased family. Mr. Charles Mayne, whom I came to succeed, was not yet removed. On the Sabbath, he preached, prayed, and advised; the people wept and cleaved to him, especially the young men of the Society, in an affecting manner; and certainly in a manner most interesting to my best feelings, for in the same spirit I had left my dear friends in Armagh.

Londonderry was at this time a half residence. The chapel meanly built, and beneath its floor were most offensive stables. The house for the accommodation of the preachers' two families, was ill calculated for the comfort of either, provided they had many children. The

Society was neither large nor opulent; and although Derry was a city renowned for its high Protestant and loyal character, it is remarkable that our Society there consisted principally of strangers. It was, however, an important post, and the Connexion had been at much expense in its support. The out-fortnight's circuit was laborious; running through Strabane, Lifford, Clady, Derg-bridge, Castlefinn, Ballindroit, Buncrana, &c.; and once in the quarter, each preacher was to change with the Innishowen missionary.

I shall trace my first excursion through the whole of this circuit, as a specimen of my routine labours, and an introduction to what may be deemed useful to record respecting them.

“ Being in Derry some time before Mr. Alcorn, I visited and preached through the week in the city. On Lord's day, 4th of August, preached with pleasing hope, morning and evening; met the Society closely, and mentioned the plan which I hoped to follow for their good. The 5th, commenced a course of lectures on the Psalms, at six o'clock in the mornings; preached in the evening to a congregation of children and young people, from Eccles. xii. 1; continued my morning lectures, which are well attended; find I can hold these meetings, and walk round the walls of the city in an hour.

“ 11th. This day the word appeared to have two edges. A few seem convinced of sin, and two persons began to meet in Society. 12th. Mr. Alcorn arrived with his family. We had a very happy commencement of our mutual labours at the prayer-meeting. The Lord is making bare his arm.

“ 13th. Rode to the country, a new place called Balloe; preached to about sixty persons, from 1 Pet. i. 8—a blessed season. 14th. Preached at six in the morning, from Hosea vi. 3, with refreshing tenderness: rode through Strabane

and Lifford to Orrstown; spoke strongly to a few persons in Adam Blair's, from Heb. iv. 9. Met the Society.

"15th. Proceeded through Castlefinn, and a fine hilly country to Dendroit, Joseph Brown's; preached to seventy hearers, Rom. v. 1, 5. It was a season of special grace. 16th. Preached in the morning. My congregation melted to tears. Mrs. Nelson professed to have been relieved of the burden of guilt which had long oppressed her soul. This lovely family is longing for God's salvation. Sat. 17. Carrickadoose, lodged at S. Orr's, a decent poor man, with a discreet wife. Visited from house to house; preached in the evening, from 1 Tim. iv. 8. Here is a Sabbath-school, with above one hundred children. Sabbath morning, met two classes, and preached from 2 Cor. v. 17; in the evening also, in Kilraile, Mr. M'Coy's, John xiv. 27. The power of God descended in an extraordinary manner, and all seemed determined to press forward in the ways of the Lord.

"19th. Preached from Heb. iv. 14, 16, our 'Great High Priest,' at six o'clock; and in the evening, in Clogher, Mr. Kerr's, brother to our two preachers, John and Thomas, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. Met the leaders. 20th. Drumclaph. Here I saw my old friend and fellow-labourer, Matthew Stuart, now superannuated, and H. M——, a man of a fine countenance and heavenly conversation, once a travelling preacher. Preached from Matt. v. 8. The power of God descended most remarkably. 21st. My morning subject, Psalm lxvi. 18.

"This country has been called the college, being the great nursery for training itinerant preachers, viz., S. Steele, Daniel M'Mullen, S. Kyle, the Kerrs, Robert and James Smith, Matthew Stuart, Finlay, &c. Where is now their glory? Surely with God is the residue of the Spirit!

“ I feel much quickened to live and labour for the Lord Jesus, with my whole soul: I have two new motives on this circuit—the excellent characters of the brethren who have immediately preceded us, Messrs. Mayne and T. Johnson, who have been very useful, and whose names are deservedly dear to the people every where; and because these brethren, and other friends, have said so much in favour of their successors. I hope and pray that they may not be disappointed. My soul is full of expectation that we shall have a glorious ingathering of souls unto our SHILOH.

“ 22nd. Preached in Matthew Donaghoe’s, near Whiskey-hill, from Eph. ii. 8; also next morning; many wept: my text Prov. xxiii. 17. Again, in the evening, in Breen, M. Smith’s, father to the preachers; heard of a man who was unspeakably blessed when returning from the preaching yesterday evening. Preached from Acts viii. 39: met the class. The man, Robert Neeley, who was made happy last night, gave a clear account of his experience, which had a powerful and quickening effect on his wife and neighbours.

“ 24th. My place was Ardstraw-bridge, Widow Cunningham’s, whose whole family are vieing with her, and each other, in love—evening subject, Luke xviii. 8. Notwithstanding heavy rains, had a fine congregation.

“ 25th. Lord’s-day, preached at nine o’clock in the morning to a large congregation, Eph. v. 8. Here, also, is a large Society, and a Sabbath-school, where 130 children were in attendance. In the evening preached in Strabane. The house was quite too small for the congregation. My subject John iv. 14; the word appeared to have made a deep impression on the hearts of the hearers. Met the Society and leaders; felt joyful in hope we should have among them a revival of zeal and discipline.

“ 26th. Preached at six o’clock in the morning to a lovely

congregation. Visited several families, and proceeded to Gortmessen, preached, and proceeded to Derry. 27th. Preached in New-buildings. After a gracious Sabbath in Derry, preached in a hopeful place called Cullion. On my next country visit I preached in Omagh and Lisleen, at the quarterly meetings; saw gracious times, and found the congregations were much increased in our own places. October 9th. I exchanged with Mr Finlay, and went to Innishowen, Mr. Mulherns. After preaching, the congregation seemed unwilling to depart, we therefore commenced a lively prayer-meeting, and felt the Lord's presence. Preached the next morning from Luke vii. and last. Mr. F., who came with me from Derry, was most remarkably blessed and comforted. My next place was Glencaw, where I preached from Acts iii. 19. Met two classes; next preached to a small congregation in Gleneeley. Was greatly surprised at the deep experimental religion of a young woman named Jane Hamilton, that I met in this insulated neighbourhood. She spoke with a glow of sacred eloquence, which could not be easily equalled; and I was informed that her life was in strict accordance with her profession.

"Rode through a tremendous storm, preached in Malin, and met the class. Next day visited Bree, Mrs. Bogg's, and addressed a small congregation. Lieutenant Nichols, son of Mrs. Nichols, Coleraine, sent his midshipman to invite me next day to the Signal Tower. Oct. 14th. This day I commence my forty-second year, and feel beyond expression the necessity of beginning to live, as I have never done, for eternity.

"Was received by Mr. Nichols with open arms and heart. His good mother and wife are here also. Walked about the wild tremendous rocks and shore, and preached in the evening to twelve soldiers and signal men, from 2 Sam. xxx. 6. We had a very happy night together.

15th. Saw them make their signals to a sloop of war, and learned a lesson of watchfulness ; then proceeded to Malin's-well, on the shore, beside a rock. Here the Romanists come with all their maladies, saying their prayers round numerous heaps of stones ; and when they suppose themselves healed of lameness, &c., leave their stilts (or crutches) behind. There are several of these, with papers rolled round them, sticking on the rocks. 17th. Rode to Mr. Duncan's, a respectable friend, where I was much at home. Preached to a small congregation. Here I was informed that there were thirty-two illicit stills at work, round one small corner of this rude country ! 18th. Proceeded to the Mullins, preached to a crowd of young people, and returned to Mr. Duncan's. 19th. Rode over a waste wilderness without seeing a house, for nearly two hours, and preached in the evening at Minneyweery.

“ I have now seen enough of Innishowen, to convince me that it is, humanly speaking, one of the farthest places in Ireland from real religion ; and seems but too likely so to continue. For, First, it abounds with Popery. Second, the church and meeting people are also ignorant and bigotted. Third, the people are generally drunken and slothful. Fourth, they have only short leases, with rack-rents, to be paid by the fruit of illicit distillation ; indeed they have, with few exceptions, but small regard for preaching or preachers. In their present condition, they have no desire for heaven, unless it were a carnal one, and that it could be procured by smuggling ! Yet, blessed be God, even here are a few precious witnesses for Christ. Returning home over the barren mountains, I wept, thinking over these sweet lines,

“ Haste, happy day ! that time I long to see,
When every child of Adam shall be free.”

Hasten that day, adorable Saviour !”

About this time my mind underwent a severe exercise, not unfrequent to itinerant preachers with large families. I had engaged to preach in Newtownstewart ; when done, a message was brought me from my family, saying that my dear wife was ill of a bilious fever, and two of my children sick. I rode home twenty-one miles ; next day I was obliged to commit her to God, and return, through excessive rains, to Strabane, or disappoint the quarterly love-feast. I commenced preaching, wondering if any good could be expected under such circumstances ; but the strength of Christ was made perfect in my weakness. It was an extraordinary season of heavenly life, love, and power ; several witnessed their having lately obtained peace with God, some a deeper work of grace, and old disciples were greatly quickened. My sinking heart was raised ; I thanked God, took courage, and on my return to Derry, found my wife and children recovering.

Shortly after this, Mr. Averell visited us in Strabane, preached with freedom, and administered the Lord's Supper to a numerous company of God's people. They were greatly blessed, and the devout acknowledgment of many of our people when returning home, was, "this day is salvation come to Strabane."

I had also a visit from my cousin, Robert Ferguson, the person who first brought me to hear a Methodist preacher. He had gone to America, and prospered in the world ; then settled his affairs, and with a pious local preacher went about doing good, and was instrumental in the salvation of many souls, particularly in the vicinity of Philadelphia. He came at this time to Ireland, to inquire after the welfare of his relations, and help them on their way to heaven. His visit to me was made aspecial blessing. His speech indeed was unpolished and vehement, but a divine power attended his exhortation ; his own heart being deeply affected, his burning words penetrated many

hearts. In Strabane, where he accompanied me, we had a memorable time, and even in Derry his exhortations will not be forgotten by those who were present at the meetings where he exercised his gift, particularly by my old friend, Alexander Cruikshank, Esq.

During this year, the work of God extended with great rapidity in the neighbourhood of Strabane. Mr. Alcorn was generally popular and useful. But a principal instrument in the conversion of souls, in the country parts of the circuit, was a local preacher of considerable talents, who, for certain imprudencies alleged against him, had for some time been suspended from preaching. He was quickened and restored after our coming to the circuit; and several persons, from sundry places, were exceedingly anxious to have him once more among them; which the Derry leaders most violently opposed. I was placed in a distressing difficulty, either to resist the spirit of grace which richly attested his ministrations, or be resisted by those men who were determined to maintain their opposition. My colleague, and all the country leaders were of my judgment; so were several brethren to whom I applied for advice. I requested that either the person in question should be called before a general leaders' meeting, to decide on his case, or that these hostile brethren should agree to leave him in the hands of the preachers, on trial, and wait the event: to neither of these proposals would they consent, so he continued to preach, and matters took their course until Conference, and in various places the work of God prospered exceedingly.

When summer arrived, I went to Coleraine to see Mr. Harpur and my Christian friends. The day being intensely hot, I unguardedly exposed myself to the mountain air, and immediately felt seized of a violent fever. The first attack was overwhelming. I was confined in Mr. John Galt's, who thought it prudent to remove his

family to the shore, but he frequently visited me himself. It was, however, to the faithful attentions of Jane Craig, who had lately been our servant, and was now engaged with Mr. Galt, that, under God, I was so soon restored to my family, and my wonted labours. This young woman had been a Romanist, but was now a truly converted, devoted follower of Christ. She determined not to leave me; and with all assiduity did she watch with and attend me, until I became convalescent. When she found me capable of receiving comfort from the Scriptures, she read with me, then poured out her soul in prayer for my peace and recovery; and when I was a little better, and able to sit up in the bed, she acknowledged the Lord's goodness with tears of gratitude. Blessed be God for such feelings! They come from heaven, and lead to it.

This was truly a sanctified affliction. The candle of the Lord shone upon my head. My soul was greatly comforted. When my bodily strength was restored, I felt also my spiritual powers invigorated and prepared for renewed exertions in the cause of my blessed Master.

At the Conference, 1812, Dr. Clarke was again our President, with great advantage to our cause; and most creditably to himself, as an eminent minister of Christ. The Derry brethren sent letters of accusation against me, on account of the local preacher referred to, and a request that I might not be returned. With regard to the former, the Conference ruled that he should be allowed to preach as usual, on the country parts of the Derry circuit; the latter was certainly my own earnest wish, nor would I consent to return, but by the unanimous vote of the Conference, Mr. Alcorn and I were therefore re-appointed to Derry; and by mutual consent, I took another house for my large family.

This became the most trying year I had hitherto seen.

The opposition leaders continued hostile; and I had many family afflictions and privations. However, the grace of God was vouchsafed, and in many singular ways did divine Providence watch over us for good, and "furnish a table in the wilderness." In the recollection of which, and the means made use of to serve the purposes of his adorable goodness, I here humbly record my grateful acknowledgments. On this subject, my views and experience were in perfect accordance with our address to the British Conference, last July. "In our temporal affairs we have had most serious embarrassments, and by the scarcity of provisions; which affected the poor in general, we were in no small degree straitened, yet the Lord hath abounded to us in all spiritual blessings; nor can we forbear to acknowledge the generous and truly Christian liberality which hath also abounded to us from our people in the time of our necessity."*

Early in this eventful year, my seventh child was born, whom we called *Thomas Ebenezer*, having most abundant reason to say, "HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US."

Our annual Conferences had been advancing in interest for several years; but that of 1813 was distinguished by extraordinary evidences of the presence and blessing of our living Head. Dr. Coke was our President. This was his twenty-fifth visit to Ireland. He had long been our attached, faithful, indefatigable friend and servant for Christ's sake. Zeal for God, a maturity of divine wisdom, united with dignity and love, were manifest on all occasions, during this his *last* and *best* presidency among us. His cordial interest in all our affairs and enactments dis-

* An extra collection had been made to meet deficiencies, which amounted to upwards of £1200.

covered a heavenly mind engaged in its most beloved and final transactions upon earth. Indeed, on one occasion, whilst discussing those weighty questions—"What are the hindrances to the greater effusion of the Holy Spirit, and how are they to be obviated?" The heavenly influence descended in a most unprecedented manner on all the preachers. "Never," says the public minutes for that year; "never did the Conference remember any conversation, at which the Holy Spirit was so remarkably present. And the whole Conference resolved, that in public and private, in company and in solitude, they would arduously labour, in the strength of Almighty grace, to fix their souls at all times on the *Most High*."

But it was the subject of Missions which engrossed Dr. Coke's capacious soul; and, with all his energies and influence, he brought that subject before the preachers. His heart was set on a mission to the East, to commence in the Island of Ceylon. Never can I forget the solemnity of that hour, when the Doctor opened the subject, and brought it home to every man's conscience, inquiring who would come forward and engage in the mighty enterprise. His language on the occasion was nearly the same as what he addressed to Mr. Drew, when writing from Dublin, but the spirit and manner cannot be written. "I am now dead to Europe, and alive for India. God himself has said to me, Go to Ceylon. I am as much convinced of the will of God in this respect as that I breathe; so fully convinced, that methinks I would rather be set naked on the Island of Ceylon, without clothes, and without a friend, than not go there." The solemnity of this scene was heightened, when our two excellent and beloved brethren, Lynch and Erskine, offered themselves to accompany the Doctor. The Conference was powerfully affected; and our brethren were given up to that great

work, in the true spirit of sacrifice, and in the name of the Lord Jesus.

On my return from Dublin, when passing through Newry with Mr. Alcorn, we were overtaken by the Doctor, who was posting in a chaise and four to Donaghadee, to attend the British Conference, preparatory to his final departure for India. Whilst the horses were changing, we partook of cake and wine with him, and proceeded, having received his hearty benediction. After clearing the suburbs, we were overtaken by the chaise; while it was driving past us, the Doctor put out his head from the window, and pronounced his final "*farewell*," adding, with great earnestness, "Brother Lanktree, remember the Missions!—form Missionary Societies!" These were his last words to me: I doubt not but the impression they left on my heart, will be lasting as my sojournment upon earth, and interwoven with all my exertions to extend the Redeemer's kingdom.

CHAPTER XVI.

1813-14-15.

My appointment was now fixed for the Coleraine circuit, very much to my mind.

July 27. Arrived there with my family, now sufficiently large, and was most cordially received, and kindly entertained, by my old friends, the Gribbens and Galts, the preacher's house and the chapel being under repair. From the time I left this town, in 1796, many changes had taken place among our people. Several of the leading men,

eminent in their day, had died in the Lord ; and between the remnant of these senior brethren, and the young men, who were now active in the work, there did not subsist the best understanding ; the discontent of the juniors appearing at our first leaders' meeting. Still the Society was lovely and respectable. My colleague, Mr. James Johnston, was a young man of an excellent spirit, who laboured with me faithfully and affectionately : a true fellow-soldier and fellow-sufferer in the cause of our Lord.

The chapel in Coleraine being beautifully prepared, I commenced my ministry there, August the first, by preaching, morning and evening, from Acts ix. 31, and Ezek. xlvii. 1—12, to encouraging congregations. In Billy, where the Lord had been carrying on a great work these few years, they were anxious to see me, and wondering I did not remember them all ! In Ballycastle, I was much gratified at finding so many of my old friends moving on in their steady way. Here, and indeed every where round the circuit, in preaching, visiting, meeting classes, &c., the Lord was greatly with us. Some appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, some were comforted, and others, who met me with tears, in the recollection of their dear friends, who were removed from them by death, during the years of my absence, were, I trust, encouraged to exercise the patience of hope.

During this, my first round through the country, I noted various particulars, from which the following are selected.

In Knockens, a place near *Knocklead* mountain, I examined a curious old fort, the centre filled with stones, covering a number of caves which are arranged under them. From its side, a huge skeleton had been lately dug out. In a valley contiguous are various monumental stones, which must have been brought here from a considerable distance. One of them is placed on a small hill,

called Clough-berragh; six more are near each other; farther down, are others in the same direction. Tradition says they were placed on the spots where certain chiefs formerly fell in battle. How blessed are we, who enjoy the peaceable fruits of righteousness, under the protection of a mild and paternal Government!

I also paid particular attention to the manner in which they managed the salmon fishing, at that most singular and curious place called Carrickarede. Here is a hanging bridge, which extends a considerable distance between two rocks, one of them on the mainland. This is a fearful height above the sea, which rolls impetuously between them. Not choosing to try my courage by crossing, I waited on the safe side, until they drew in what is called a shot of fish. It might teach "fishers of men" a useful lesson. I observed one person, called the sight's man, who sat high on a rock, perhaps two or three hundred feet from where there were two others in a boat, managing the net. Another sight's man sat nearly opposite. When the salmon came within the net, the sight's man shouted to those in the boat, who immediately rowed round as swiftly as possible, letting down the net until they came to a certain part of the rock, where several others were waiting to assist. All then united to drag in the fish, one man throwing in stones occasionally to affright the salmon, and prevent them from escaping. When the net was drawn to a sufficiently narrow compass, it was pulled over the boat's edge, and the fish secured.

Near this is a new church, built at a place called the Castle. Here, as report says, during the siege of Derry, the old church was filled with Protestants, and given in charge to a certain Priest, named M'Glaim. He was ordered to allow them nothing but water; but, being a man of humanity, he contrived to have the bottoms of the cans filled with oatmeal, well pressed down, with the water at

the top ; and thus were the poor prisoners sustained, until relief came to Derry, when they obtained deliverance. It is said that Priest M'Glaim's relations are still in the country and much respected by their Protestant neighbours.

Walking along these shores with George M'Curdy, we heard a dismal shriek, and then several persons running in a certain direction. We proceeded to the spot, and found that a fine young woman had just been drowned. The greedy sea raged horribly, which, it is said, is always the case here, when any person is lost. Every effort was tried, but the body could not then be found. Herself and sister had just been bathing in a convenient bason between rocks. In the absence of a large wave, she ran down to pull mureens ; but, in a moment, it returned with irresistible violence, and swept her off. She just waved her hand to her sister, and disappeared. Before I left this place, I strove to comfort the survivor, and commend her to God. They were daughters of a widow Clyde, near Ballymoney.

This calamity did not deter a foolish multitude from assembling near the Causeway to a kind of vanity fair. I went among them, and endeavoured to arrest their attention, by preaching from Deuteronomy xxxii. 29—"O that they were wise," &c.; and in the evening again, not far distant, preached to a very crowded audience, from John iv. 13, where we had much of the divine presence. On the 22d, assisted by my colleague and our excellent missionary, Arthur Noble, held a large field-meeting in a place called Now-Head. The Lord was graciously with us. On the 29th, had a visit from Mr. Thomas Waugh, a sensible young man, who preached from an appropriate text, Acts xvi. 5, in a good style of language. He is likely to become useful and influential in our body.

After a few months of diligent attention to the duties

of our ministry in public and private, we began to look forward with confidence for a revival. We observed an increasing spirit of love and zeal among our people; our congregations were enlarged in every place; a refreshing heavenly influence attended the ministration of the word, which was sealed by the conversion of souls in a few places. Several new members were added to our Societies. We had various new openings for preaching, and a general expectation that the Lord would do great things for us before Conference.

We expected good, and, thanks to the God of all grace, we were not disappointed. Mr. Johnston's zealous labours, with the acceptable visits of Mr. Noble, when he intersected our circuit, were greatly blessed. The steady local exertions of Mr. John Hill, whom the Lord of the harvest had thrust out to preach the Gospel in and about Ballycastle, contributed to our prosperity. The leaders and local preachers formed a most efficient band of auxiliaries, who laboured unitedly and heartily to promote the glory of God in the salvation of their neighbours. Nor were our "honourable women" backward to promote the common cause, especially in the parish of Billy, by means of prayer-meetings among their own sex. The spirit of unity, faith, and prayer, was generally cherished, and a spring-tide of life and salvation overflowed the circuit. "Great was the Holy One of Israel" in the midst of our Zion. On many occasions, the rocks and hills, and Antrim shores, resounded with the praises of Zion's King in our field-meetings, or when returning home from our love-feasts, with everlasting joy in prospect.

In the parish of Billy, Mr. Samuel Hill's large barn was our principal place of worship. In this neighbourhood, there had been a mighty awakening about the year 1807. The God of glory then spoke with the majestic voice of his thunder, which roused many to flee from the

wrath to come. On that occasion, the lightning struck the house of Samuel Howard, smashed the furniture, scathed the servant-maid, tore down part of the chimney and wall, electrified and alarmed every person contiguous to the place, and, in a moment of time, prepared the way of the Lord. The danger was imminent, but no life was lost.

It was on a Sabbath evening in August that this solemn warning was given. When young and old crowded to witness the effects of the lightning on Howard's house, and perceived their own merciful preservation, the goodness of God was strikingly manifest. David M'Curdy and Neal Horan, men noted in that country for holy zeal, were present, and felt their spirit stirred up to improve the opportunity, which they did most effectually, exhorting the people to repent and turn to God, which was followed by earnest prayer. A gracious work commenced in many hearts, which increased and continued to our time. The place was now too strait for us, which ultimately led to the commencement of our chapel upon Mr. Hill's ground.

About this time, I heard of the grievous fall of one whom I greatly loved, and on whose account I had suffered much. It afforded, no doubt, a temporary triumph to those who had persecuted me on his account; and yet, on a review of that affair, I do not see how I could have acted otherwise than I did, and preserve a good conscience. He appeared blessedly restored to the divine favour, a manifest work of grace was forwarded by his instrumentality, of which many were made partakers, and I could not be responsible for his *final* perseverance. Our blessed Lord, "who knew what was in man," did not withdraw his sanction from those he had called into the ministry, because of foreseen unfaithfulness, but warned them of their danger. Even Paul, and Barnabas, "the son of consolation," differed seriously in their judgment

and tempers, and for a season divided their labours, in consequence of John Mark being employed again in the ministry, "who departed from them from Pamphilia, and went not with them to the work."—Acts xv. 39.

Another cause of perplexity and disquietude to my mind, arose from a person who had become greatly attached to me and my family. He lived with us for a season in Armagh, and for the same purpose followed us to Derry, and accompanied us to Coleraine. He was a man of very singular habits, and possessed of considerable property. The proposals he made to remunerate us for his accommodation, were such as appeared both seasonable and providential. On coming to Derry, he disposed of most of his money to chosen men, who were deemed faithful, and were to be his factors in the yarn business; but the speculation failed to such an extent, as to affect his mind, almost to despondency, and proved most distressing to us in its results. We had, however, an amicable final settlement, and he returned to his own country.

At this distressing crisis, the winter set in with unusual severity. In the midst of it, I was seized with a nervous fever, and the energies of mind and body were extremely prostrated. There appeared but a step between me and death. Just then, my dear wife's expected confinement came on, and after a dangerous travail she was delivered of twins. Blessed be God, in this trying hour, we were not forsaken! Our heavenly Father chastened us for our profit, but granted us supporting grace, and a merciful recovery. During our affliction, we had the incessant prayers and sympathies of his people—the kind attentions of my colleague and Mr. Noble; and the unceasing assiduities of friends, but especially dear Mrs. Forrester and Mrs. Gribben.

We had now nine children. Past experience encour-

aged us to place our hope in God. We were solicitous that the names of our children should remind ourselves and them of our obligations to "follow the Lord fully," and therefore called our twins Joshua and Caleb. Mr. Averell being at that time on a tour through the North, we, through his ministry, dedicated them to our covenant God.

At this period, the subject of addressing the Conference, requesting the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper by our own preachers, was agitated very generally. With most of our people on the Coleraine circuit, it became a matter of deep concern. They were preparing to lay their claims before the next Conference with great affection and fidelity. To this Mr. Averell appeared favourable; but before he left Coleraine, he received a printed letter from a respectable preacher, representing the ruinous consequences which he apprehended must inevitably follow from such a procedure. This letter was designed to be confidential; but Mr. Averell read it with comments, to some of our friends. From the contents of that letter, and its immediate effects on his own mind, I was fully convinced of the evils it would necessarily produce through our Societies, and spoke my sentiments with honest freedom;—for no occurrence, since I became acquainted with Methodism, gave me equal anxiety. He resented my remarks with the utmost severity. And thus ended a happy Christian intercourse and correspondence, which had been cherished for nearly twenty years! This was in the commencement of 1814.

During the remainder of the Conference year, our people were frequently engaged in speaking of their intended address, whilst the following circumstance brought the subject fully before them, concentrated their views, and roused them to exertion. In the neighbourhood of Ballywillan, near Coleraine, we had gracious prospects,

and several local brethren who were zealous for God. The Rev. James Huey, Presbyterian minister of the place, resolved to overthrow this great cause of his annoyance; to accomplish which, he buckled on his armour, and proclaimed war against "lay preaching." At a public ordination, he exerted his oratorical powers to impress clergy and laity with his views, and subsequently had his sermon printed and published extensively. Galled by his public and private harangues on the subject, some of his congregation determined to forsake his ministry, and forthwith seek the ordinances of the Gospel from their own preachers. They accordingly made common cause with their brethren on the other parts of the circuit, who joined them heartily and unanimously.

The address was therefore prepared, in which they stated among other matters, "That, in their present circumstances, those ordinances which the Lord Jesus had appointed to convey blessings to their souls, had rather become a snare; in consequence of which, some of them had ceased to partake of the Lord's Supper for eighteen years, unless when Mr. Averell came among them; this they could not consider as answering the purpose of the divine institution, seeing he visited them but seldom, and many of the Society could not then attend; which, in effect, deprived them altogether of the benefit of that ordinance."

When the Conference assembled, Mr. Averell was chosen President, and Mr. William Stewart, Secretary. Sundry petitions of the same import as that from our circuit, were presented, which in due time brought the important subject before us. The motion proposed for discussion was, "That the request of the petitioners be now granted; and that from henceforth we will administer the ordinances of the Gospel to such of our Societies as require them." And, truly, if any subject ever fully en-

grossed the minds of the preachers, or drew forth their happiest expressions, it was the sacramental question. It occupied the principal part of a day, and was attended with the conscious unction of the Holy Spirit. Previously to the vote being taken, an earnest appeal was made to the throne of heavenly grace ;—our prayers were offered up with flowing tears and agonizing hearts, that our God would, in his great goodness, direct us to determine according to his will. Brothers Andrew Hamilton, jun., and Thomas Roberts, from England, being the public organs of uttering our requests. The question was then put, and the Conference decided by a majority of ten, “ That we would comply with the earnest and Scriptural requests of our people.”

Thus far was our way graciously directed, and our counsels influenced by the wisdom which is from above. On the next morning, however, when the order of the day was to adjust the manner and circumstances of administration, a motion was introduced by the minority, subversive of our late resolution :—“ That the operation of the vote of our last sitting should be suspended for one year, and a conciliatory letter sent to those circuits which had petitioned for the ordinances.” This motion, after a very warm debate, was carried, and in its most unhappy operation, brought on our Connexion more distressing results than all the forebodings and prejudices of those who hearkened to the “ Accuser of the brethren,” and debated the subject out of doors, could have anticipated, had the Conference adhered to its first resolution.

The following Letter was addressed to the Petitioners.

Dated Dublin, 10th July, 1814.

“ Dear Brethren—The subject of your Petition, has been considered in the most dispassionate manner by Conference ; which, after viewing it in its different bear-

ings, came to the determination of yielding to the wishes of those who desired the Lord's Supper; but many weighty reasons having afterwards occurred, arising from circumstances not then fully adverted to, induced them to *reconsider* this weighty matter, and after the most mature deliberation thereon, are persuaded, that it is indispensibly necessary to suspend its operation until next Conference.

“ We are not insensible, dear brethren, of the inconveniencies under which you now labour; but we beseech you to bear with patience these things, until the providence of God opens our way so clearly, that your wishes may be complied with without any material injury to the work of God. We are, dear brethren,

Your affectionate servants in Christ,

(Signed by order, and in behalf of the Conference,)

WILLIAM STEWART, *Secretary.*”

I returned to Coleraine with a heavy heart, and endeavoured with my faithful colleague to give myself to my ministerial work. Nor did we labour in vain. We had life and love, with a regular increase to our Societies through the year. Our people, though much disappointed in their expectations, bore their privations “with patience” through the year, relying on the goodness of their cause, and the implied engagement of Conference, for ultimate success.

The year 1815, should be memorable in the annals of Irish Methodism, as it must necessarily form a distinguished era in my eventful life.

The postponement of the grant of the Lord's Supper to our people, opened the door for violent opposition. In most circuits public meetings were held, and printed resolutions and addresses forwarded through the land, many of them hostile to the Scriptural and conscientious de-

mands of their brethren : these led to counter resolutions, sometimes from the same places ; and to decided and strong declarations from those circuits which were favourable to the admission of the ordinances : only a few were of a conciliatory and moderate description.

Several of the preachers also published replies to the first letter from Dublin, which were distinguished for sound argument, fidelity, and firmness. I shall only refer to this controversy so far as to explain my own subsequent conduct, and its influence on the people among whom I laboured.

Our brethren on the Coleraine circuit avowed their sentiments in a circular, dated the 5th of February, signed by forty-seven official characters. It formed a reply to a formidable address proceeding from the leaders' meeting in Dublin. In this they avowed their difference of judgment from their Dublin brethren, and their determination not to hesitate in claiming the seasonable administration of every Gospel ordinance from those men who had ministered to them the word of life ; which they considered essentially necessary for their good and their children after them. They deprecated divisions—and concluded by entreating their dear brethren every where, to make the Word of God, “not the majority of public opinion,” their rule of judgment.

To this I appended a few lines, expressive of my accordance with their views, and closed my remarks thus—“For my part, I rejoice to make this public *declaration*, that God being my helper, I am resolved to meet all the consequences which can possibly follow from a conscientious adherence to the testimony of Jesus.”

This was immediately followed by a flaming, sarcastic address from Derry, full of personalities against me ; breathing the highest tone of hostility against either a *particular* or entire change in our economy. This was signed

by fourteen names, and among them the renowned *George Montgomery West*, who, I apprehend, framed that manifesto!

As the year advanced, we had much labour between the ordinary and extraordinary duties of the circuit. But we had rest in labour, for we felt the Lord was with us, and the ardent affection, and fervent prayers of the people, cheered our hearts and supported our hands.

All the time I could command from these important concerns, was employed in writing a series of letters, addressed to the Rev. James Huey, in reply to his printed sermon against "LAY PREACHING." One immediate advantage resulted from my attention to this subject. The Gospel ministry, and its requirements, were deeply impressed on my mind. I became more intimately conversant with the Holy Scriptures; and more familiar in my meditations with the history of those worthies "who loved not their lives unto death."

CHAPTER XVII.

1815-16.

THE Conference, 1815, commenced July the 7th. The Rev. Walter Griffith, our amiable countryman, who had been many years labouring in England, was sent over to preside among us. Mr. Crozier was appointed our Secretary. The Conference was most numerous attended; for our affairs were now brought to such an alarming crisis, that every preacher was vitally interested in its pending deliberations; and a wisdom and influence above

human were necessary, to preserve our connexion, and rescue us from our difficulties.

From the Coleraine circuit, we had the satisfaction of returning 699 members, and of presenting our beloved and useful brother, John Hill, from Ballycastle, to the itinerant ministry.

Our people renewed their application for the ordinances; the leaders signing for themselves, and also the members respectively, by their own request. They prayed, "That threatening addresses, whose arguments consisted of *woes, fears, old plans, ruin of Methodism, libels against the preachers' characters, &c.*, should be left to their own merit; and appealed to them, as men of truth and integrity, not to suffer any opposing overruling influence to prevent them from granting the reasonable and Scriptural request of their people."

Previously to the discussion of that important question, the utmost caution was used to preserve the unity of the preachers. Complaints having been made, that several of them had used undue influence in forwarding petitions for the Lord's Supper, the brethren on that side voluntarily offered themselves to a severe scrutiny, which ended creditably to their characters. An act of oblivion was then passed, respecting all letters and pamphlets which had been circulated during the year; that the sacramental subject might be discussed without any unkindly feelings.

There were numerous petitions for the ordinances; respectful, urgent, and affectionate. These were all read first. Then the various addresses and protestations *against* their admission—with letters and remonstrances from absent preachers; from clergymen, and from parish clerks! These were sufficiently imposing; but the most formidable array of opposition, was the presentation of the great "Remonstrance" from the Dublin leaders. This was

engrossed on a vast roll of parchment, and brought into Conference by my venerable old friend, Arthur Keene, Esq., attended by a deputation of several of the most respectable official characters belonging to our Society in Dublin. The Conference received them standing; and the scene was deeply impressive.

The debate was opened by Mr. Deery, moving, "That the petitioners have their request;" an amendment was afterwards proposed by Mr. Tobias, "That an affectionate letter be sent to the petitioners, saying, that Mr. Averell will meet their wants as far as possible." The chief speakers on the original motion were, the Mover, Crozier, Ousley, Mayne, Steele, Lanktree, Bailey, M'Cord; for the amendment—Tobias, M'Mullen, A. Hamilton, Averell, Brown, Banks, Rutledge, William Stewart. The amendment was carried by a considerable majority.

The following explanatory statement and address were then prepared, and printed in our Minutes for this year:—
"As in the Conference of 1814, a discussion took place concerning the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in some of our Societies; which discussion has been variously represented, some fearing that *a total separation from the Established and other churches was intended*, but which separation made no part of the discussion at all; we therefore feel it our duty to set the matter in its true light.

"In that Conference, petitions from several circuits were laid before us, containing the following statement and request, viz.:—'*We have been deprived for many years of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and we therefore pray that provision may be made for our receiving it from the hands of our own preachers.*'"

After long deliberation, a vote passed in favour of the claimants, but, on re-consideration, it was judged right to stay the operation of said vote for one year.

At this Conference, the subject came again before us ; and upon a full consideration of all our circumstances, it was determined—" That an affectionate address be written to the petitioners, stating, that however we may feel for their situation, in the present state of the Irish Connexion, we cannot grant their request. But in order to meet their necessities as far as possible, we request our brother Averell, upon application from the several circuits concerned, according to his ability and convenience, to administer to them the holy sacraments."

Letter to the Societies who have petitioned for the Sacraments, &c. &c. &c.

" Dearly beloved brethren—You are the fruit of our labours—the children of our prayers and tears. Whatever in your circumstances afflicts, or in your religious progress may embarrass you, must awaken in us the liveliest feelings of just concern. Your case, respecting the Supper of our Lord, fully came before us. Your letters were all read, and deliberately considered. We are deeply pained, on finding the real distresses many of you labour under. As guardians of Methodism in Ireland, every thing that can be done, consistent with the best interests of the body, we feel most cordially disposed to do ; but on a review of all the circumstances, we assure you in the most affectionate manner, that in our judgment, to meet your case as might be desired by you, would most certainly prove injurious to our Connexion at large ; therefore, the only thing that can be done by us at present to afford relief, is to request our beloved brother Averell to visit you as often as possible, to minister to you the precious memorials of redeeming love. We hope, dear brethren, that you will continue to evince the peacefulness and long-suffering of the Gospel, and study to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

“ May the Eternal Spirit shed his holy influence abundantly upon you !

“ Signed in behalf, and by order of the Conference,
“ WALTER GRIFFITH, *President*.
“ ROBERT CROZIER, *Secretary*.”

At the close of our Conference, the state of my mind could not easily be described. By our last enactment, the Gospel claims and expectations of a fair proportion of our people were completely frustrated. Our retrograde movements in 1814 had brought us into bondage, and closed up every avenue of redress. Hosts of hostile Societies, under their respective leaders, were combined to watch our movements. However the aspect of Providence should shine on our future prospects, or the necessities of our people demand our extended ministrations, or our own consciences urge us to obey God rather than man, we were left no alternative ; for, according to the avowed principle of our opponents, and the design of our blockade, no Methodist preacher, *as such*, could be permitted to administer the Lord's Supper, even to a single Society ! It was, therefore, sufficiently plain, that so long as this influence prevailed, and overawed the Conference, no redress could be expected from that quarter. As to Mr. Averell's ministrations, he could not, with tenfold strength and convenience, meet the present demands of our Societies. Besides, the time for receiving him with cordiality, on many circuits, was now passed by. From him numbers of our people had first learned to estimate the spiritual advantage of having the Lord's Supper among themselves, and now they most justly considered him as the principal hindrance to their immediate and constant enjoyment of Christian privileges.

Viewing the subject, therefore, in all its bearings, as it regarded myself, I felt utterly at a loss what to determine.

One thing was sufficiently obvious, that we had no ground for expecting the ordinances among us, but through the special grace of the Lord Jesus, and in the spirit of sacrifice and martyrdom.

My heart was bound up with my brethren, whilst it yearned over our aggrieved and mourning people, particularly those on the Coleraine circuit. I knew this must be the case with many of the preachers; and there appeared to me no practicable plan of redeeming our characters as men of God, but by acting henceforth, in regard to the Lord's Supper, as we had done for years past, without reprehension, in reference to baptism; by ministering it to our Societies where they peaceably required it, in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus, and "abide the consequences." Whilst indulging these views, my soul was animated by hope, and my peace considerably restored. The agitation of our Societies was sadly felt by the defalcation in our pecuniary resources. We were necessitated to borrow £1139 to balance our accounts for the past year, and we had no encouragement to expect more liberal supplies for that which was commencing.

My appointment was for the Belfast circuit, with Mr. George Stephenson—no enviable station, considering the character of its address to Conference. Mr. Stephenson was superintendent of the circuit, and I was chosen chairman of the district. Immediately after our business was concluded, I received an address from Newry circuit, signed by thirty-three brethren, remonstrating against the decision of the Conference respecting the Lord's Supper, and entreating I would bring it forward; but the opportunity for so doing was past; and I prepared to return, and attend to my important charge, "trusting in the name of the Lord," and endeavouring "to stay my soul upon my God," during the present season of providential darkness and perplexity.

On the 24th of July, I left Dublin on a jaunting car, having with me Mr. Noble the Missionary, and my daughter, who was returning from Mrs. French's school. Coming down from the Man-of-War, on the road to Balbriggan, our mare was affrighted by some accident, and ran off at full speed. I was holding the reins, and called on them to stay on the car, supposing I could manage her, as the road was broad. I remember no more what happened, having been flung off in some unaccountable manner, until I found myself sitting in the dust of the road, surrounded by a number of people, with my poor daughter and Mr. Noble overwhelmed with distress, and the blood flowing from my mouth and nose. This was a most extraordinary interposition of Providence. I was thrown off the car with such force that my neck was dislocated, my head was turned under my body, and I lay apparently dead. In that critical moment, while a crowd of people was gathering, a stout countryman came forward, and gently lifted me into a sitting posture; then placing his knees to my shoulders, raised my head to its natural position, and so continued it until animation was restored. With much difficulty I was slowly removed, first to Balbriggan, then to Newry, where, in my friend Mr. McKenny's, father to the Missionary, I was confined for twelve days. Here, in the light of eternity, I reviewed the part I had taken in the recent occurrences of our body, and found it most satisfactory to my conscience. Confidence in the God of my salvation was strengthened, and my soul invigorated with divine consolation to live or die to his glory. The kind and sympathizing attentions of the amiable family where I was confined; of Dr. Millar who attended me in the most disinterested manner, and of the other Newry friends, are written on my heart, will not be forgotten in the day of Christ.

The late division of Conference produced a powerful

sensation in the minds of my friends on the Coleraine circuit. On hearing it they immediately held a public meeting, and resolved that in future they would receive no preacher sent to them by the Conference, unless he would engage to administer to them the ordinances of Christ. A copy of their resolutions and address was handed me in Newry, which they sent forward to be printed and circulated through the land. This I prevented, until I would first see them. I also used my influence with the Newry brethren, not hastily to commit themselves by any act which would afterwards give them cause of trouble. As soon as I was able, I wrote to the Coleraine brethren, and entreated them to form no resolution against receiving their preachers, but to comfort them in the Lord: to use no threats, but endeavour to *persuade* them to administer the ordinances on their own responsibility. Anxious to meet them myself, I reached Coleraine before my letter came to hand, and found the brethren in a most distracted state; my late respected colleague was ill of intermitting fever, and his mind in the deepest distress. Notwithstanding my entreaties, the bulk of the leaders and people were immovably determined never to receive a Methodist preacher, or acknowledge him as a minister of Christ, unless he gave them such proof of fidelity to his Lord and Master, as they now required. They alleged that they acted from a sense of duty, which was confirmed by an outpouring of the Spirit of grace upon them, when they assembled for counsel and prayer on the occasion. After entreating them to make a respectful and affectionate application to Messrs. Sturgeon and Cobain, my successors, to induce them to comply with their desires, they inquired, how I was myself resolved to act? My reply was, that if such application were made to me on the Belfast circuit, I would comply, and act in the way I had

recommended. Thus, supposing I had satisfied their minds, I prepared to leave them and hasten to Belfast.

In the interim, they held another public meeting to consult about the advices I had given them, and before they parted, came to the resolution, that they would apply to the preachers who were expected on their circuit, but that before I left them, they would put my own principles to a solemn test. They accordingly prepared an address, written in the most intreating language, "in the name of the Lord Jesus, that before I left the circuit I would administer to them the tokens of his dying love; that they looked up to me, as children to a father. They asked bread, and trusted I would not give them a stone."

The subject was now brought home to my heart;—it was my principal argument with the Conference, to do the will of God, and meet the event with firmness. During a whole night I made it a matter of earnest prayer; and consulting with my wife, we cordially agreed to commit ourselves and our children to our Heavenly Father, and that I would comply with the request, whatever might be the result. We accordingly removed to Ballylough next day, August the 8th, and to as many as assembled on the occasion, and they were a goodly company, of one heart and of one soul, I preached from 2 Cor. iv. 5, and afterwards administered to them the Supper of our Lord. It was a season not to be forgotten; distinguished by the sacred softening influence of the Holy Spirit—of holy love, flowing tears, and joy in God—it was a spiritual Gilgal, where the Lord "rolled away our reproach." Adored be his infinite love! Thus, I expected that the way was prepared for my brethren: I might be blamed, but the door was open for them to the hearts and houses of the people, with the prospect of unity, peace, and prosperity.

On my arrival in Belfast, I was received with much respect and kindness, notwithstanding their knowledge of my principles. Indeed that circumstance endeared me to many, who were waiting and most ardently longing for the jubilee of Christian freedom.

Mr. Stephenson, my colleague, was an amiable man, of a conciliatory spirit, who had not committed himself on the subject. We had, therefore, a favourable entrance into Belfast, and the prospect of usefulness was extensive, notwithstanding a considerable leaven of opposition amongst the stewards and leaders.

Shortly after my coming to the circuit, a letter was sent to the hostile leaders, from a discontented individual in Coleraine, saying that I had kindled a dreadful flame, and divided the Coleraine circuit. In reply, I mentioned the simple facts of the case, and all seemed content. Mr. Sturgeon wrote to myself, complaining sharply of what I had done. To him, and Mr. Cobain I replied, regretting that they had not improved the opportunity afforded them of reconciling the people; and inquired, "what have these brethren done, but what the opposition brethren told the Conference they would do, (whether it were right or wrong is another question), if matters were not decided according to *their* mind? And thousands wrote to the same effect, after publishing the most bitter invectives against us; but these are honourable men! And why did they separate? Because they wanted the preachers, whom, as the ministers of Christ, they loved and respected above all men, to exceed the provisions of the last Conference, in an extraordinary case, to do their souls good, and not leave them a reproach to their enemies. They did not separate, until they renewed their solicitations to you both, to the same effect. Their request was rejected, and we know the consequence." I concluded by proposing the following plan for concilia

tion:—"1. That they would go among those brethren and show themselves interested in their welfare. 2. If they judged it imprudent to give them the ordinances themselves, to propose an unexceptionable plan of accommodation, saying they might use *me* as far as I could serve their interest. 3. To prevail on all parties to forgive and forget wherein they had offended each other. 4. Instead of degrading the leading men, to encourage them to labour for God as they had long been accustomed to do."

In the close of this month, Mr. Stephenson received a strong letter from Mr. Averell, urging him to have me forthwith tried by a district meeting, and put away from the body of preachers. "Let Mr. Lanktree become a Dissenting minister, or what he pleases, but let him not remain among us" was the conclusion. He opened the communication to me in a reserved, but good spirit. I told him *how* and *why* I had acted in the case referred to. He replied, that whatever followed, I would have one consolation, which was "the testimony of a good conscience."

Mr. Stephenson had no intention of complying with Mr. A.'s manifesto. But even if he had, and providing that I had been sacrificed at Mr. Averell's request, it would not have silenced the cry of God's people for their Gospel privileges, nor quenched the holy zeal which burned in the hearts of many of the preachers, to approve themselves to God, by feeding his flock, and fulfilling their pastoral duties according to the mind of the Chief Shepherd.

The attempt to have me expelled, was soon published, though not by me, or at my request.

This circumstance, as might be anticipated, proved favourable to the sacramental cause. It was an intimation to those who espoused it, of what they had to expect from

their intolerant brethren. Accordingly, a numerous and respectable meeting of our friends was convened in Armagh, on the 18th of October, "For the purpose of calmly considering the best method of obtaining their religious privileges." They accordingly resolved, "Not to live any longer in the neglect of that ordinance, instituted and commanded by Christ our Lord. That we will now, in the name of God, request the Lord's Supper from our own preachers. That brother Lanktree has merited our warmest thanks for his courage and zeal, in meeting the wishes of our dear brethren in Coleraine circuit; and that he shall hereafter have our prompt and vigorous support, and also every other preacher who shall follow his example. That we have no opposition to, or enmity against, any brother who chooses to attend the Established or any other church—we meet for the purpose of obtaining the same liberty for ourselves which we cheerfully allow to others," &c. This was signed JOHN NOBLE and THOMAS SHILLINGTON, with above 160 other names, mostly official characters; the major part of them from circuits that I had travelled, and above twenty from Belfast circuit, town and country.

Shortly after the above publication, several of our Belfast friends presented a requisition to Mr. Stephenson and myself, firm, but respectful, of the same import, to which he agreed, in a spirit and manner most creditable to his Christian feeling. We accordingly commenced in Newtownards, where it was hailed as the harbinger of the days of the Son of Man: it was crowded with communicants, and crowned with the presence and blessing of our living Head. In the Falls, Donaghadee, and Portaferry, we were favoured with similar tokens of our Lord's approbation. In like manner, Messrs. Steele and Cranston complied with a requisition from the Armagh circuit, as did Mr. Thomas Johnson in Newry; from which places,

I had sundry delightful accounts of the blessings which were poured forth on their sacramental assemblies.

It was not so easy to settle the affairs of the Coleraine circuit. The preachers not complying with the request of the people, a separation took place. The country parts of the circuit, generally, refused to receive the preachers. Hence, want of confidence, misunderstandings, and prejudices were increased. Those who were for the Lord's Supper cleaved much to each other, and increased in strength. After repeated invitations, I visited them in the commencement of 1816, and great was our rejoicing together. After this, Mr. Hamilton, from the Antrim Mission, went among them, and remained until Conference: during which time many conversions took place; the Societies were preserved, comforted, and increased. Mr. Hill, of Ballylough, wrote to me respecting one of these meetings, and said, he never saw any thing like it. "They said," he observes, "that we were fallen from God, but none ever fell from him by obeying his commands."

The following is Mr. Steele's account, dated Jan. 6, 1816 :—"Last Lord's day, Mr. Cranston and I administered the Lord's Supper to about 150 persons, in Armagh chapel. The presence of God was peculiarly present on the occasion. I do not believe there was one in the house that did not feel his power. When will the Methodists be wise, and embrace their privileges as Christians? The Lord is reviving his work about Keady and Killyleagh. Since we began to administer the ordinances, some of the most hardened sinners have been constrained in the prayer-meetings to cry aloud for mercy. God will stand by his own cause, and the enemies of truth and Christian liberty be confounded; but not until they have done harm."

In Strabane, also, Messrs. Kerr and Johnston had similar evidences of the Lord's goodness. Those who

had lent their names and influence to oppose the preachers, now joined heartily to support the admission of the ordinances, and were blessed in their deed.

While our affairs were thus favourably progressing, our opponents were not inactive. They issued tremendous circulars from Portadown, Strabane,* Clones, Limerick, &c. The *hue-and-cry* was directed to every post and garrison against the INNOVATORS. Our names and characters were held up to reproach, and every where proscribed. Justice!—tardy justice, was demanded against the evil doers, especially against MATTHEW LANKTREE.† In the mean time, I bless the Lord, my soul dwelt at ease, and his will and work were the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Several of my faithful brethren endeavoured to contribute to my comfort and support, by their kind communications and promises of adherence to the testimony of Jesus; but, through grace, I was constantly borne

* “The authors of the Strabane resolutions demonstrate,” says Mr. Steele, (remarks, page 47,) “that unsupported by Scripture, and destitute of argument to convince the judgment, or motives to persuade, they can ‘RESOLVE’ to persecute their brethren. But before they proceed to excision, by what they are pleased to call a merciful application of ‘*the knife*,’ I would ask them, in the name of God, have they forgotten that the religion of Christ is a religion of peace, of gentleness and love? That none can drink in the spirit of it, without imbibing a certain expansibility of soul, a generosity of sentiment, and a magnanimity of religious action, which the little tiny soul of a bigot can never comprehend.”

† “Mr. Wesley’s innovations on church-order in Dublin, appear, from several of his letters, to have produced somewhat outrageous attacks upon him from several quarters in that city. In one of them he says, “Every week I am bespattered in the public papers. Many are in tears on the occasion; many terribly frightened, and crying out, ‘Ob, what will the end be? Why, glory to God in the highest, and peace and good-will among men.’ Such was his rejoinder to these high church alarms.”—*Watson’s Life of the Rev. John Wesley*, p, 293.

above the fear of "what man could do," being confident that "the Lord was my helper."

Our friends became exceedingly desirous that we should have the Lord's Supper in the town of Belfast. Having heard of the happiness enjoyed by their brethren in various places, and tasted that the Lord is gracious on their own circuit, they wished to enjoy their privilege in the large chapel, Donegall-square. For this they consulted the trustees, and were refused. We would have been most kindly accommodated from another quarter, but concluded, that for the sake of peace and edification, we would wait until a suitable place could be procured and fitted up for our own use, where we could constantly wait upon the Lord without distraction. This led to the building of Cotton-court chapel, which was accomplished in about three months from its commencement. We opened it on the second of June, 1816. Such was the hallowing influence felt on the occasion, that a lady who was present, and very sceptical on that subject, was heard to say, "She had now witnessed an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and that God was with us of a truth!" In preparing for that happy occasion, we drew up an address to our opposing brethren in Belfast, entreating them to lay aside their prejudice, and unite with us in a public acknowledgment of our common Saviour; asserting that if they had any thing in their minds against any of us, we were willing to do every thing in our power to satisfy them; but it was all in vain.

Warm with the devotional spirit of the blessed ordinance they had been attending, the sacramentarians drew up a general address "to the preachers, itinerant and local—the leaders and private members of the Methodist Societies in Ireland;" in which they boldly avowed their sentiments; and like those who had felt the happy effects, invited all to a participation of similar enjoyments. In

reply to certain hostile publications, they deprecate the injury inflicted on the character of the founder of Methodism, and of their present preachers—"That the epithets applied to them are as void of truth, as the means they propose to prevent what they call the *destructive progress* of the administration of the sacraments by them, are destitute of love and forbearance. We have proved the blessed reverse in every part of this circuit, where we have surrounded the table of our Lord. He has, according to his promise, been in the midst of us. Penitents have been pardoned; believers filled with joy and peace; and many have been added to our Societies. We highly approve of, and are resolved cordially and effectually to support and fulfil the resolution passed in Armagh, on the 18th of October, 1815; and we most cordially join that respectable meeting in returning our warmest thanks to brother Lanktree, for his courage and zeal in meeting the wishes of our dear brethren on the Coleraine circuit; and unitedly to brothers Stephenson and Lanktree, for their firm, manly, and conscientious conduct, in administering the ordinances of Christ on this circuit; and to every other preacher whose zeal and piety lead them in the same honourable path. May their bow always abide in strength, and the arms of their hands be made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

During the latter part of our ministerial year, our labours were greatly multiplied, not only by the additional duties now devolved on us, but by a special blessing on our preaching, particularly in Portaferry and its vicinity. My own soul had a lively intimation that we should have a revival there, and it was introduced in such a manner as to direct those who witnessed it, to the special and effectual working of the word and spirit of Jehovah.

By a change in our travelling plan, in favour of Donaghadee, we altered our time of preaching in Portaferry

ferry, from Sabbath evening to the morning at ten o'clock. This circumstance induced a few persons from Quintin-bay to come to our preaching. The preacher, in the close of a discourse from Matthew xxii. 35, &c., in a way rather extraordinary, called the attention of his audience to that searching question of our Lord, verse 42, "What think ye of Christ?" The word pierced all their consciences like a two-edged sword—they were convinced of sin and unbelief—inquired what they must do to be saved—shortly after joined Society—found peace with God—invited the preachers—then became a new Society; which branched into Newcastle, Kearney, &c., and became our crown of rejoicing, amidst the calumny and reproach which were so plentifully conferred upon us by our opponents. Happily these children whom God had given to us were born in due time; and, from the commencement of their spiritual life, were nourished and established by the cordial administration of the ordinances of the Gospel. In our return of members, we had a considerable increase on the circuit, principally from that quarter.

At our first coming to Belfast, we were accustomed to preach in a large school-house, which had been erected in John Hall's field, Ballymacarrett, where we had promising congregations. Here were a few men who became so much incensed at our administering the Lord's Supper, that they expelled us, in due form, from any further use of the school-house. This was, I believe, the first act of that description in Ireland. We rented another place for preaching, and they had but small reason to conclude that they had done "God service," for shortly after our expulsion, the winds of heaven got permission to blow so violently upon that house, that it was suddenly and completely destroyed, and became a heap of ruins!

In the latter end of June, the Rev. Dr. Clarke paid us

a most seasonable visit in Belfast. He attended our love-feast, on Lord's day the 23d, and spoke his experience with great simplicity, testifying his happy enjoyment of salvation by faith, in the atonement and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ—of which he felt assured, as well by rational demonstration, as by the witness of the Holy Spirit. On the evening of the same day, he addressed an overflowing audience, from Luke vii. 20—23, setting forth, in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, the glory of Immanuel, God with us, as manifested to the Jewish nation, by the display of his miracles. Next day we were favoured with his company to breakfast, with a number of Christian friends who were anxious to enjoy the privilege of his conversation.

It was now, for the first time, that we took counsel respecting the propriety and advantage of inviting the Conference to Belfast. An excellent public spirit was evinced on the occasion. Our friends immediately set about making the necessary provision, and found, without much difficulty, gratuitous accommodations for eighty-five preachers. An address was accordingly prepared, cordially inviting the Conference in 1817, which was gratefully received, but, for prudential reasons, postponed to a longer date.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1816-17-18.

DR. CLARKE was our President this year, and Samuel Steele, Secretary. Considering the circumstances of our Irish connexion, and the transactions of the Conference, this must necessarily have been one of the Doctor's most important public services for the Church of Christ. When it pleased the Lord to call him from his earthly labours, and the publication of his life was announced, I waited with solicitude for the third volume, expecting to find therein an able report of our proceedings from his own pen. How greatly was I disappointed, in not finding a single line on the subject ! This being most unaccountably the case, I shall gather up my own brief fragments of information, respecting the trial of the preachers for breach of order, and our final debate respecting the administration of the ordinances to our people, which rendered that Conference so memorable. There were ninety-three preachers present. At an early stage of the business, a committee of pacification was nominated, composed of five preachers in favour of the ordinances, and as many on the other side.

There was a formidable letter sent in from Saurin, the Attorney-General, tending to intimidate the Conference on the subject of chapel trusts ; and a similar report respecting the threatenings of certain trustees ; concerning which our worthy President very much relieved our minds, by explaining our connexion with the British Conference.* We commenced business on July the 5th.

* On the subject of our chapel trusts, Dr. Clarke made the following remarks in a letter to a friend, some time after the British Con-

It was on the 11th that the brethren charged with the breach of order were called to the bar of the house for trial. These were Lanktree, Stephenson, Steele, Cranston, Thomas Johnson, William Hamilton, T. Kerr, and James Johnston.

I was the first called to account for violating the order of Conference, in giving the Lord's Supper to our people on the Coleraine and Belfast circuit. My defence may be gathered from the facts already before the reader ; various documents on the subject having been read. I was enabled to address my brethren with much boldness in the fear of God ; for, indeed, I had a peaceful and approving conscience.

Mr. Stephenson's answer was straight forward. He said, that he did comply with the earnest and Scriptural request of the people. He could use no argument against that request, only that the Conference had not agreed to it, and he did not like to use *that* argument.

Mr. Steele showed the circumstances of the Armagh circuit, and the influence of John Noble there, who strenuously advocated the sacramental cause in that coun-

ference :—" So variously are your chapels settled, that no case could be made out that could take in the several trusts in your deeds, leases, &c. You should not therefore have expected the English Conference to obtain you *any opinion* on this head. The matter is exceedingly short in law. Every trust is sacred ; and as is the trust, so would be the decision in any court.

" If, on the examination of your deeds, you find that neither preaching in Church hours, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, &c. are *proscribed* ; and that there are no conditions *specified* relative to such uses of the chapels ; then no trustee can legally shut them up. A trustee can only plead *on a breach of the trust* ; and he, as guardian, may interfere to prevent the premises from being *alienated* from their original purpose. ' Saurin, therefore, is not right.' It is the trust clause, alone, that determines concerning the use of the chapel."

try. The great meeting in Armagh requested him to give them the Lord's Supper before they parted ; but he refused, promising, at the same time, that if the circuit demanded it from him, he would comply, which he did accordingly. Mr. Cranston also complied with their request, because it was agreeable to his colleague, Mr. Steele, and accorded with his own conscientious views.

Mr. Thomas Johnson said, that he performed his duty as a matter of conscience, at the request of the people, and anxious to preserve the peace of the Newry circuit. Mr. Hamilton was persuaded by the affecting statements of Mr. Samuel Hill, to go to the Coleraine circuit, and minister to them the memorials of the death of Christ, which they so ardently desired. It was a call he could not resist, and he found the Lord blessedly with him.

Mr. Kerr's defence was, that he had resisted many requisitions from the Strabane circuit, until he saw the Lord's Supper administered by Mr. Steele in Keady ; his soul was then overwhelmed with the love of Christ ; and being again applied to by his people, he complied, and felt that God was powerfully present.

Mr. James Johnston pleaded nothing in self-defence. The request of the people, and of his superintendent, together with the conscientious sense of what the Lord required from him in his present circumstances, determined his mind, and he acted accordingly.

When we withdrew, and the Conference entered on the subject of our delinquency, it might be supposed, perhaps, that the former characters of the men concerned, and the circumstances wherein we were placed, would have borne us out honourably, or at least blameless : that the investigation would only have proved our disinterested zeal for the glory of God, and our adherence to the example of Mr. Wesley, whose single aim was to follow where

Providence guided, in opposition to ruinous expediency, the policy of party, the fears of mistaken piety, especially as the Conference was now prepared, in a limited way, to meet the wants of our people; but this was not the case. It was debated for a considerable time, principally, I believe, through the influence of Mr. Averell, that we should be expelled from the Connexion. At length the Conference resolved, that brothers Lanktree, Stephenson, Steele, Thomas Johnson and Cranston be *reprehended*; and also be judged ineligible to fill the offices of Secretary of Conference, Representative to the British Conference, and Chairmen of districts for the coming year; and that brothers Thomas Kerr, William Hamilton, and James Johnston, in addition to this censure, be judged ineligible to fill the office of Superintendent for this year.

The reason assigned for this difference of censure was thus stated—"The circumstances of the *former* were peculiarly pressing and difficult; while those of the *latter* were less inconvenient, and of course less excusable.

This censure affords sufficient room for reflection. I am grieved to record it, and shall only remark, that at that time the pacific plan was not adopted; the general prevailing desire of the brethren was to cleave to each other, and prevent any breach among the Societies; they wished to conciliate those who had been high in opposition:—but this would not satisfy the discontented. They only considered it a *mock* punishment; and we were only the more honoured by those with whom and for whose sake we suffered.

Previous to the report of the pacific committee being read, Mr. Tobias made a most impassioned and affecting speech, persuading the brethren to cleave to God and to each other, which made a powerful impression on the Conference. He concluded thus:—"Whatever may be the determination of the committee, nothing can be so

mischievous as division among ourselves ; we have calculated the consequences, and are determined that, let these be what they may, we stand or fall together." The preachers were electrified ; and simultaneously starting to their feet, with the exception of Messrs. Adam Averell and Robert Smith, (some of them with streaming eyes,) exclaimed as with one voice—" We *will* stand or fall together !" Mr. Averell, quite alarmed, cried out, " No motion, no motion, after such a speech !" Mr. Tobias ardently replied, " I put no motion ; I see on whom I can depend."

The pacific committee had much difficulty in coming to any important conclusion. At length the majority agreed, " That *something* must be done to meet the spiritual wants of our people, and it must be done *now*."

In the debate upon the report, no less than twenty-eight brethren delivered their sentiments. Messrs. Averell and Tobias were the chief speakers. The former observed, that he felt great interest in the present question ; that he had religion before he came among the Methodists, though he had but little when ordained a clergyman. When he obtained mercy himself, he then began to form small Societies like those among us, and to use discipline among them. He approved of Methodism ; and before he joined himself to the Conference, was permitted to travel and preach to the Methodist congregations ; his reason for resigning his office, as curate in the Established Church, was, because they would not allow him to preach the Gospel gratuitously. Though not in Priest's orders, Dr. Coke persuaded him to administer the sacraments after the example of Rowland Hill.

That he believed Mr. Wesley possessed a prophetic spirit when he established his societies ; that in proof of this, his views were realized, as it regarded the influence of Methodism on the church, the sending forth of mission-

aries, and the formation of Bible Societies, &c.; and he believed, if we proceeded in that divine way, we would become a cosmographical religion. He was not persuaded that the English Conference had adopted the *best* plan; he compared English Methodism to the times of Constantine the Great; was never struck with the spirituality of the English Methodists.*

He acknowledged that he had pledged himself to do all in his power to prepare the people for the introduction of the ordinances, and did so until he came to Derry, where he received Mr. S.'s letter, which he read for some friends in Coleraine; that he then saw all sides prepared for war, and withdrew himself from the field of battle; that we knew the result of last year's debate; he had the same reasons against the measure *now* that he had then—there were but *few* for it, and many against it, and these our *best friends*.

Mr. Tobias commenced his reply, by stating his reasons for adopting the plan he formerly laboured to prevent: it had cost him sleepless nights, and brought grey hairs upon his head. The *crisis* is now come, whatever have been the *causes*. "This is not," said he, "a *numerical* question; no man says, that there are not cases of real distress. Our people apply to us for redress, and eternal truth says they ought not to be rejected. The reflections against English Methodism I consider a calumny, which has been trumpeted through our land, until it echoes from the Cove of Cork to the Giant's Causeway, and reverberates again from the shores of Great Britain." He strongly resented and ably rebutted the censure on the English Methodists as being deficient in spirituality; he had sufficient evidence of the contrary. He denied that they discovered laxity of discipline—then proceeded to *refute* the objection which

* See page 179.

was canted round the kingdom, that our children would be born Methodists : they obtained no right of membership, in consequence of our having the ordinances of the Gospel among us, more than formerly. With regard to the *many* who were in opposition, he was not insensible that many would use their influence against the operation of the measure ; he granted that we might expect a storm, but it would cease, and a calm succeed. He concluded by saying, emphatically, “ Friends, though united to me by every religious and manly tie, if opposed to the welfare of Methodism, I am prepared to relinquish. I can lay down my head to be chopped off, but will not violate the dictates of my conscience. The man to whom I am most indebted, who excludes a Methodist preacher from his house for doing his duty, I can bid him good morning ! Such men I can give up, but not my brethren, the preachers. I would say, then, with Mr. S. ‘ My *heart* says there must be something done.’ *Something must be done.* This is the universal feeling. *The time* is come. The spiritual wants of the people must be met. This is my most unqualified determination.”

Mr. Averell, in explanation, said that he had a good feeling in his mind, let the matter go as it might. He reflected on the British Conference for sending their most popular preachers wherever there was a pious church clergyman ; that it was no proof of their *spirituality* that they abounded in wealth, &c. ; said he would publish his protest in a circular letter. “ That his plan to the pacific committee was, that the preachers who had broken the vote of last Conference, should be left to the people to whom they administered, but let the remainder go on their way as usual.”

Much more was said on the same side, with many expressions of fear, and anticipations of evil. The most striking was the speech of Mr. M‘Cornock, who considered

that the Conference was only about to gratify "a few discontented people, that neither God or man could please." Those of the preachers who had changed their views on the subject, he thought, were "only fit for strait waistcoats."

At the close of the debate, a blessed feeling pervaded the Conference. The tide was now turned. Some of the brethren closed their speeches on the favourable side, in a most animating and affecting manner, especially Messrs. Mayne and Bailey. The former said, "that instead of receiving the Ark of the Covenant with fear, like the Israelites formerly, we should go up as one man, to bear it on our shoulders, and bring it among us with shoutings of thanksgiving." The latter asked—"Did the LORD JESUS command what we were to do? Did *he* promise to be with us? Did he purchase the blessings we were to expect with his own blood? Are we to deny our own people what they have so earnestly pleaded for upon their knees; and for which their petitions lie upon your table—whilst God, and angels, and men, wait the result; and which the pen of the historian is ready to transmit to posterity? What will posterity say, if we refuse to the people of God their lawful claims? God forbid we should! Rather let us do his will, and say, 'Welcome poverty, reproach and persecution.' " He concluded with flowing tears.

Mr. Tobias closed the debate. He observed, that notwithstanding all that had been said on the other side, 'he was yet in his right mind,' and did not need a 'strait waistcoat.' He strongly recommended unity, and that we should assume such a decision of conduct, as to convince all parties that we would cleave to God and each other, and act in a determined manner. He warned Mr. Averell against his protest, not because he feared it—he admitted that Mr. Averell gave himself to us; but it was also true, that he had *gained his influence by us*. "The time is

come," was the conclusion, "and I am prepared to make every sacrifice which may follow."

The motion being called for, the votes *for* granting the prayer of the petitioners were sixty-two, against it twenty-six—majority, thirty-six.

Thus ended one of the most interesting and searching debates ever engaged in by the Irish Conference. Through the whole of it, our President discovered that fidelity and impartiality which became his character; and, when the question was decided, he appeared even more than himself. In a speech of two hours length, he, as Representative of the British Conference, addressed us in the most impressive manner; and when he concluded, the meeting unanimously returned him thanks. Were it possible that his address could have been published, it must have produced the most salutary effects among our people generally. By the majority of those who heard it, the impression it made on their minds will scarcely be forgotten. A mere outline of the principal topics it embraced, I shall insert, with a letter addressed by him to a friend a few months previously, wherein he refers to the same subject. This will corroborate and explain some of my notes, in his own nervous style.

1. He observed, "That Mr. Wesley had no plan but to *follow the openings of Providence*; had he formed a plan, it would have been the creature of man, not of God. He followed where he was convinced that God led the way. Our doctrine is from the revelation of God, and our discipline likewise. Mr. Wesley was a great instrument, in the hand of Providence, in reviving and spreading Scriptural Christianity in the world; but it is from the Head of the church, that our doctrine and discipline have, through him, been committed to us, and they both go hand in hand through our whole economy.

2. "In following Providence and the order of God,

Mr. Wesley was obliged to do many things contrary to his *prejudices*—these, I well know, were of the high church character. I have full evidence of this, from being in possession of the original papers sent by Mr. Wesley's father to Archbishop Sharpe, and am well acquainted with the history of the Wesley family, and the education given to Mr. John Wesley. Besides, I was one of what was called Mr. Wesley's privy council, and am therefore well acquainted with his mind on the most important subjects. It was according to his great principle of action, that Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke for America, as he did others for Scotland. He foresaw that the Methodists should be a GREAT PEOPLE, he therefore ordained several bishops to keep up the *spirit* of the Church of England. But Providence never intended that any individual should be a successor to Mr. Wesley. When he died, Dr. Coke came to Dublin, to put himself at the head of the Irish Methodists, but he (Adam Clarke) being then in Dublin, opposed it, and dismissed the Doctor as fast as he came. On the same subject, there was, in England, a competition between Dr. Coke and Mr. Mather, which was overruled by the appointment of district meetings.

3. "With regard to the introduction of the ordinances, I believe it originated in the demands of the people—they urged their demand at the British Conference; which, like the voice of the trumpet at Mount Sinai, waxed, year after year, *louder and louder*. By not attending to their earnest entreaties, we sacrificed the lovely Society at Chester; and for the same reasons was the church service which Mr. Wesley appointed to be used in Whitefriar-street, laid aside at his death. I have been myself as much prejudiced as Adam Averell; but I had to submit to the force of truth. In England, we were pushed to the greatest extremities. In the Conference of 1792, they were so perplexed, that, for the sake of peace, they agreed

to decide the question by *lot*. That year, they lost 300 members : the next year, they said they could not get on thus ; and although they were surrounded by men who came to the Conference with good temper, but opposed to innovation, yet, they agreed to the plan of pacification, and the consequences were blessed beyond their expectation.

4. The Doctor next adverted to his opportunities of being fully acquainted with the present state of Methodism, compared with the former ; and, of course, passing a correct judgment respecting its prosperity and spirituality. “ I was twice President of the British Conference : I was so at the GRAND CLIMACTERICAL YEAR OF METHODISM, at which time I had all its great offices in my hands. I had access to Government ; knew their sentiments of Methodism, and had full evidence that it had not lost its character or influence. I have met more classes on my circuit than any man, and have seen no loss of spirituality. I will not make invidious comparisons between the Methodists in England and Ireland ; in both, they are the children of my God and Father ; but this I will say, from perfect acquaintance with the subject, that they have, in England, incomparably more grace, and more stability since the introduction of the sacrament than before.

5. He concluded by refuting the calumny against the characters of the preachers—from his own knowledge, and from the judgment of Government. “ I have had access to the inmost archives of the State, where their characters were properly appreciated. I have had a particular conversation with Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Perceval, in which they spoke most honourably of the utility of the Irish preachers in the time of the rebellion. It is well known they have been bulwarks to the church against the attacks of Popery, and other enemies,” &c.

The following is the letter referred to :—

“ My dear Brother,—About ten minutes ago I received your letter, dated May 21, and had been, a little time before, resolving to write to you. The Dublin brethren did not honour me with their letter; but I saw that of the trustees and Mr. ——— in a friend’s hand. I was not a little pained at both. Either the writers were ignorant of the *truth*, or they disguised it. If ignorant, they should not have written on the subject; if they knew better, they must answer it to God, and his injured cause.

“ I know Methodism better than any man in Ireland, and better than any correspondent that the Dublin people can boast; and, I can say, that our having preaching at church hours, and the sacraments from the hands of our own preachers, have been marked by the most distinguished approbation of God. And I’ll tell you what to these gentlemen seems to be a *secret*, that the Methodists in England are a thousand times more attached to the Church of England and her service, than they were ever before; and the method which we were before taking, to *drive* them to the church, was driving *them*, as it is now doing the Methodists of Ireland, into dissenting congregations.

“ I am now one of the oldest preachers in the British connexion, and there are only about ten in the whole connexion older. I have had the principal concerns of this connexion before me, for between thirty and forty years. I have had often the administration of their *weightiest concerns*. I have been a medium of intercourse between them and *Government*, and can say, that they never stood so *high* with government, never stood so high with all real churchmen, and were never so prosperous as they are now. Far from there being a *wall* between us and our usefulness to the church, I can say that the wall which our own bigotry once raised, similar to that which

foolish people are now raising among *you*, has been, by the goodness of God, levelled to the ground, and our usefulness to the church is greater than ever.

“ When we had no service in church hours, nor sacrament from our own preachers, we *crept* on as we could. At last the people in many places clamoured, and we were obliged to grant the sacrament, in a few cases, or lose the Societies. As more requested the same blessing, certain trustees, who had got some good bigotted men to join them, cried out *innovation*, and were impious enough to predict (because of their caprices), the ruin of the work of God. We then, by an awful LOT, determined that the sacrament, &c. should not be administered for *one year in any place*. On this God *frowned* most *fearfully*. From the commencement of Methodism till that time, we had always been on the *increase*. In that awful year, and thank God there is only that one in the annals of Methodism, we not only gained none, but we decreased *three hundred members* ! The next year, the sacrament was allowed, under certain restrictions, and we had 4000 of an increase, and, from that day to the present, we have been increasing from four to ten and twelve thousand annually ! And let me tell those persons who pretend to be so very *wise* in this business, that Methodism has more *solidity*, more *consistency*, more rational *godliness*, and more of the life of God, than it ever had in former times. In the teeth of the false assertion contained in one of your circular letters, I say, that owing to this vile bigotry, Methodism has made no proportionate progress in Ireland.

You have a body of as holy and sensible men as in Europe for your preachers ; and these men have had both their prayers and their labours hindered. For my own part, I have made up my mind never to witness the disgrace of my country, while it continues under this Anti-

christian yoke. This alone has caused me to refuse the honour done me by my brethren. They have it now in their power to throw off this yoke; if they do it, they will soon have such blessings as they never before experienced. But let every thing be done in the spirit of Christ.

I am, very dear Brother, yours,

ADAM CLARKE."

Mr. Stephenson and I were returned to Belfast, and were placed in such a relation to the bulk of our people, that we were enabled to pursue the path of duty with increasing advantage to them and comfort to ourselves. Finding the impracticability of attending to the various openings which were presented to us before Conference, we stated our case to the Missionary Committee, and with special pleading, prevailed in obtaining a preacher who could give himself wholly to the labours of a Home Mission. Mr. John Hill was appointed, in consequence, to the Belfast Mission; to labour principally in the Ards. This was a great blessing to that country, and generally useful to the circuit, by its reviving influence on our Societies and congregations.

The authorized, regular, and peaceful administration of the Lord's Supper, afforded new vigour to our old friends, and stability to our new members.

In Belfast, this was very observable. The word of life was graciously applied; and they that humbly waited upon the Lord renewed their strength. We were not, however, without some painful feelings, frequently renewed, from the defection and opposition of a few of our once warm friends, and of such leaders and trustees as were preparing to secede from us, when a fit opportunity should occur.

This was a period when Methodist preachers were par-

ticularly called to live by faith. The dearth, and scarcity of food in Belfast, were extraordinary. Many of my brethren, as well as myself, had not only to suffer, in consequence of the privations of several years, which rendered unavailable our ordinary resources, but from the humiliation and embarrassment occasioned by the system of exclusion resorted to on several circuits, now aggravated by the public distress. But, thanks be to God, who comforteth his servants in all their tribulations, though "perplexed we were not in despair." I had considerable intercourse with many of them during this trying year, and always found them "patient in tribulation, and rejoicing in hope." As it regarded myself and family; as our Lord had taught us to pray for our "daily bread," so did we, through his goodness, obtain it; frequently in such a manner as to fill and overflow our hearts with astonishment and adoring gratitude.

By convening a meeting of several "members and friends of the Methodist Society in Belfast," on the 14th December, 1816, we were able to form what we called the "Methodist Benevolent Society." The resolutions were published, and a fund raised, to assist those who should be found in delicate and trying circumstances, and those extreme cases of affliction which were not embraced by other Institutions. A depository was provided for donations of wearing apparel for men, women, and children, and visitors were chosen who should solicit subscriptions, visit and relieve the afflicted, and administer to their spiritual consolation by advice and prayer. This Institution was of incalculable service, especially to God's poor.

Thus was our year filled up. When Conference again approached, I had a most kind and respectable invitation from the Sligo circuit, to labour among them when I should leave Belfast; but which, from the state of my

health, and other weighty concerns, I reluctantly declined. For the same reasons I did not attend the Conference.

The concessions made last year to the demands of our people, were so grievous to the *Ultra Wesleyan* leaders, that they made a most determined and final effort to overrule the approaching Conference, and induce them to revoke their former vote in favour of the ordinances.* To prepare the way to the accomplishment of this favourite object, various partial, exaggerated, and hostile publications, had been widely circulated during the year. On the meeting of the present Conference, a considerable number of the men who had committed themselves in the cause of opposition, either delegated or self-appointed, joined with a few of the leading men of the Dublin Society, formed themselves into a committee, and proposed

* Aware of the intentions of these men, and pressed by various difficulties connected with the state of our chapels and connexion in Ireland, our late President, Dr. Clarke, was consulted. The concluding paragraph, containing his reply on the subject of the Lord's Supper, is worthy of its author.

"Dated Millbrook, 26th December, 1816.

"My advice to you all is, look up to God, and keep close together; never think of measuring back your steps to Trustee Craft again. Give up the sacrament of the Lord's Supper *when* you go to drink the new wine in the kingdom of God. Let neither fear nor flattery induce you to it *one moment sooner*. Had you had it twenty years ago, you would have been now doubly more numerous and doubly more holy. God has broken your chain; if you heal it, or suffer *others* to do so, you will have his curse and not his blessing.

"If the genuine Methodists of Ireland stand fast in their fiery trial, God will make you both great and glorious. Look for your help from God. Do not suppose that any man's money is necessary to the support of Christ's cause. 'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' May God abide with you!

"I am, my dear Brother, your's affectionately,

"ADAM CLARKE."

to enter into negotiation on the subject, with a deputation from the Conference. Anxious for peace, a most respectable deputation was appointed, and long and frequent meetings took place; but the affair ended in disappointment. For these gentlemen, who formed the committee, would concede nothing, nor allow of any accommodation to their brethren, unless Conference, as a *preliminary*, would repeal their vote of 1816. For they had agreed upon *one principle*, which, like “the laws of the Medes and Persians,” should be unalterable, *that no Methodist preacher, as such, should, under any circumstances, administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, to any of our Societies*; of course, no proposition made to them by the Conference could meet their acceptance, not even *Wesleyan ordination*, which could have been supplied from our returned Missionaries, and the Rev. Henry Moore, our respected countryman, at that time on a visit to our Conference, from England. There was therefore no alternative between submitting to a principle, equally at variance with the example and provisions of the founder of Methodism, as with the institutes of our common Christianity; or standing firmly by their own solemn determination—to serve the Lord Christ, and meet the consequences, as their brethren had done in the year 1815. And, blessed be God, they were found faithful; and notwithstanding strong temptations to separate from each other, they continued one in Christ Jesus.

My soul adores the corrective—the just—the kind Providence, which presided over this Conference! They were now as a body brought to the test of principle. And notwithstanding their full persuasion, that multiplied privations and afflictions awaited them in the path of duty, they nobly advanced, as became men of God, not only to endure minor sufferings and indignities, but to die at their post for “the name of the Lord Jesus.”

As it regarded myself, from the state of exhaustion brought on by the labours of the past and foregoing years, and my many bodily infirmities, I longed for a season of rest, and was indulged by my brethren to remain in Belfast as a supernumerary this year; in consequence of which, I took a house in Thomas-street, near the fever hospital, which was then crowded with patients.

Messrs. William Smith and Thomas Johnson were appointed to the Belfast circuit. The former had been inflexibly opposed to our sacramental privileges—the latter, a zealous but prudent advocate and sufferer in their favour; but they were both pious and talented men, who, though differing in judgment, were one in heart. From their society and ministry I expected many blessings. They entered on the duties of the circuit, according to my expectation, in the gracious spirit of their office, but there was an impressive and solemn peculiarity in their first discourses. Death and eternity were their principal subjects; probably suggested by the prevailing mortality. One of Mr. Smith's texts was Isaiah xxxviii. 1, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." Another, Numbers xx. 28, "And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them on Eleazer his son; and Aaron died there on the top of the mount."

Mrs. Smith was seized with fever, but shortly recovered. I preached in a few of Mr. Smith's places, and on my return found Mr. Johnson very ill. The Sabbath morning before he took to his bed, his text was, Matthew xxv. 10, "Then they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." And in the evening, when it was but too manifest he was oppressed with sickness, he endeavoured to preach again, from 1 John v. 4, "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." Next day I found him overpowered by the disorder, but calmly waiting his Master's will. That

night I preached in his place near Comber, and next day, September the 4th, was informed of his death! Mr. Smith and I were deeply affected by this sudden call and removal of a respected brother; and when attempting to address the mourning friends and relatives who attended the funeral, we found it difficult to proceed. The admonitory sentiment of our Christian poet was that of each heart,

“Who next shall be summoned away?”

My merciful God is it I!”

The question now was, who should fill the place of our departed friend? Mr. Smith wished me to make the attempt, and I dared not refuse: I resumed, therefore, my former labours, and waited on the Lord for his promised aid to renew my strength.

Previously to the death of dear brother Johnson, I had been most seriously scrutinizing my past motives, as one who might suddenly be called to give an account of my stewardship, and reviewing the procedure of divine goodness towards me; the present call from *eternity* urging me to work while the opportunity was afforded, accorded with my best feelings, and left no time for hesitation. And I must record, to the honour of my blessed Master, that whilst I was necessitated to be in “labours more abundant,” in consequence of the whole of the sacramental duties devolving on me, and many other concerns arising from the state of our public and private affairs as a people; and whilst I had much to suffer from bodily infirmities and family afflictions, I look back on this year as one of the happiest of my earthly pilgrimage. Some of my reflections were thus recorded:—

1. “I cannot express how much I feel indebted to the tender mercy of God, in blessing my ministry hitherto, notwithstanding my many imperfections and hindrances.

2. “I admire the astonishing guidance of divine wisdom in respect to the part I have taken in the sacramental

subject. God knows that my eye has been single, and my heart upright before him. The authority of Christ Jesus my Lord; the desire to please him, though the world should frown; to see his glory in the sanctuary, and his blessing descending on his people, were my motives for duty. This has been my consolation amidst the contempt and party rage which followed; and I adore the Lord my God, he has given me the most indubitable evidence of his appointment to his own work, in the manifestation of his special presence, on every sacramental occasion I have witnessed to the present. We have felt, divinely felt—‘The unutterable tenderness’—the sacred awe—the silent, melting, overpowering influence of the Holy Spirit, revealing Jesus to our hearts.

3. “Never were the words of eternal life so clear to my understanding, or so dear to my heart, as since my late trials. I have felt a peculiar interest in the promises; and an ardent longing that my Lord would make me meet to dwell for ever with the ‘noble army of martyrs,’ and the spirits of just men made perfect, in mansions of endless peace and triumph.

4. “The care of an ever bountiful Providence over myself and family has been wonderful, since I came to Belfast. We certainly have seen ‘days of adversity,’ and we have had suffering where we might have expected sympathy; but all is past! Behold God is my salvation! may his holy name be glorified for ever!” While thus taking a retrospect of the past, and waiting upon the Lord for a present blessing and future direction, indescribable peace and assurance overflowed my soul, and all anxiety was dissipated.

A few particulars of the occurrences of this year shall be extracted from my journal, and recorded to the glory of God.

September 14th. Preached at ten o’clock in Donegall-

square, from Rom. viii. 31, to a lovely audience, and at twelve, in Cotton-court, Rom. viii. 32; then administered the Lord's Supper to about 130 communicants. Surely it was a time to be gratefully remembered! Lay down to rest my weary body. Rose, and preached in the large chapel at seven o'clock, from Psalm cxviii. 25. I have been wonderfully supported and cheered by His presence and blessing, who is the health of my countenance and my God. N.B.—This was my regular work one Sabbath every month, with little variation, through the year, in Belfast.

16th. Went to Lurgan, where I had my first interview with Mr. John Johnston. Next day he brought me in his gig to near Richhill, entertaining me with the account of his most extraordinary salvation from former intemperate habits, and the conversion of his soul to God. Spent the night with the hospitable family of the Langtrys', Belview; Mr. L. and his son Henry having both died since I was here last. Thanks be to God, Mr. L. had good hope in his death. Next day I attended the "Dungannon Committee," in Portadown. There were twelve or thirteen preachers, and more than as many brethren from different parts.

A painful report was delivered respecting the divisions and distractions which are breaking out on different circuits; and they will be suffered, until the purposes of our Lord for our chastisement and purification shall be accomplished, but no farther. Returned with Mr. Johnston to Lurgan, and took a bed in his hospitable mansion; then hastened to Belfast. This journey greatly refreshed my mind and revived my health.

Oct. 3d. Rode to Ballyhalbert. My place should have been with James M'Connell, but he had departed this life a few hours before I arrived. His last words were, "Glory, glory, glory!" Preached at night in John

Hughes' barn, to a great crowd ; Mr. Hill with me ; we had a happy night, and here the ark of the covenant continues to rest.

4th. Mr. Hill and I attended the funeral. I stood on a tombstone and preached to a vast crowd from Rom. xiv. 8, " Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's ;" and again in Kearney in the evening.

5th. Lord's day, Portaferry, preached at ten o'clock to a fine audience ; the power of God was present, and the love-feast a season of extraordinary life and love. Felt greatly united to our dear people. Preached again, to a crowded congregation, at seven in the evening, 2 Cor. iii. 18. God will bear me witness how much I have laboured for the good of this place. Called the attention of my audience to the decayed state of the chapel, and next day collected a few pounds to commence its repairs ; before I left the town, our zealous country friends came in to take off the roof, and I rode on to Knock, near Belfast.

19th. Preached three times ; never saw a more delightful prospect. Our congregations are overflowing the chapels and houses every where. Surely the fields are " whitening for the harvest."

27th. Rode to Ballyeasbro' through heavy rains. Preached in a barn at six o'clock ; the crowd so great I feared that some of them would be smothered. My text, Luke xiv. 22. After they left the house, the night becoming clear, I went out and addressed them again, sung and prayed, then finally dismissed my most earnest and affectionate congregation.

The typhus fever continuing its ravages, I made up my mind to visit the fever hospital regularly, and as many in private *as would send for me* ; and through grace, I was preserved " as far from danger as from fear." Nov. 11th. The shops were all shut, in consequence of the death of the Princess Charlotte and her son. Thus is the

righteous Governor of the world calling the nation to mourning, from the prince upon the throne to the meanest pauper!

19th. We appointed as a fast day, to humble ourselves before God. To this the discontented part of our leaders agreed, and it was indeed a gracious solemn season. We held prayer-meetings, and I preached in the forenoon, from Isa. lxi. 3. In the evening from 2 Cor. vii. 1. I trust while we thus "seek peace and ensue it," the God of peace will accept our prayer.

30th. Lord's day. A large tent having been prepared, I preached and administered the Lord's Supper in Quintinbay. We were greatly favoured. There was a continual outpouring of the Spirit of God from the beginning to the end of the service; my own soul was unutterably drawn into God. Preached in the market-house, Portaferry, at seven in the evening, to a very large congregation; and again at seven the next morning to upwards of sixty hearers.

I have had of late some signal mercies, and my labours have been greatly increased, as well as my troubles, in procuring money to rebuild Portaferry chapel, at this heavy season of the year, and money scarcely to be had on any account.

December 5th. Saw the astonishing letter addressed by the Rev. Adam Averell, to Mr. Smith *and his colleague!* proposing a plan to bring as many as possible of the preachers to divide from their brethren, and adopt his measures.* His great argument is, what he considers the prophetic spirit of Mr. Wesley, and a traditionary account of something he had said respecting the line of conduct which should be adopted by the friends of the church, in the event of the Methodists ever forming a separation from it.

Blessed be God, this deep-laid scheme did not succeed!

* See Appendix, D.

On the same day, I was assailed on the same subject from an equally unexpected quarter. "Even by visions and revelations," *said to be from the Lord!*

Being sent for to Mr. Smith's, I found, on my arrival, one of our old leaders, Mr. Atkinson, and Joseph M'Cracken from Newtownbreda, waiting for me; the latter having lately recovered from a fever. He proposed that we should all go into the chapel, for it was there he was ordered to deliver his message. Having seated ourselves under the pulpit, he opened his commission, saying, that *while he lay sick* he received a *new revelation*, which principally respected *me*. This he was ordered to write down, and deliver to Richard Atkinson, who was to read it to myself and Mr. Smith in the chapel; but the *sacred writing* was not to be given up. The purport of it was, that I had been *resisting the Spirit of God* for two years, by administering the ordinances; that, providing I repented, and returned to the right way, I would obtain forgiveness, and be greatly honoured; but if not, I should be suddenly destroyed, even *like Sodom and Gomorrah!*

He delivered a message to Mr. Smith also, that *he had not stood faithfully* in the way that the Lord had showed him, and that he must return to it, if he would act according to the will of God.

When all this was delivered, the next thing revealed was, that we should all go to prayer, and the Lord would answer for himself. There was some difficulty in this. I was asked to pray, and, of course, refused. Mr. Smith, however, kneeled down, and repeated the Collect for the second Sunday in Advent, and so the ceremony ended! When Messrs. Smith and Atkinson walked out, I endeavoured to reason with Joseph, but he was too confident to profit by any thing I could say, and I returned home more than ever thankful to my God for the written record of his revealed will, and grieved at the delusions and dis-

tractions to which those men are exposed, who do not in practice, as well as in profession, make the Bible the “*only* rule, and the *sufficient* rule, of their faith and practice.”

Dec. 24. Met Mr. Hill, with whom I have lately had some precious seasons, at Mr. Thomson’s, Ballyhalbert shore. Smuggling is a sore curse in this neighbourhood! We had a very large audience, which I addressed from Luke i. 71. The word was with power. After preaching, while prayer was made, many were cut to the heart, cried earnestly for mercy, and, having obtained consolation, rejoiced exceedingly in God their Saviour. It was a glorious season. The 25th, Mr. Hill preached, at six o’clock, a good sermon, from 2 Cor. viii. 9. It was a season rich in blessing. At eleven, I preached at James Mulree’s, a man of a most fervent spirit, who ascribes his conversion; through grace, to my ministry. The house was crowded. It was a season of uncommon influence. Had another large audience, and blessed time in Quintinbay, in the evening. My text, 1 Tim. i. 15.

1818, Jan. 7. Attended the meeting of “the Dunganon Committee” in Portadown. Twenty preachers, and many other friends present. The former meeting reported grievous matters; many things were now announced which afforded consolation and hope.

1. That notwithstanding Mr. Averell’s exertions, none of our preachers, as far as was known, had joined his party.

2. The lawsuit respecting our chapels, though protracted, is likely to end favourably.

3. The Dublin Society and friends, have generally and nobly stood by the Conference, notwithstanding the defection of a few leading men, and the opening of their new chapel.

4. The character of the preachers is rising in public

estimation, and their friends increasing throughout the kingdom.

5. Miss Houston, a Dublin lady, has lately died, and left by legacy £2000 to the British and Foreign Bible Society, as much to our Missions, and £1000 for the benefit of preachers' daughters when off the education list.

6. Best of all, the work of conversion, and gathering in of souls to Christ, is reviving in a glorious manner, very generally. Hallelujah !

Feb. 15. We have a delightful prospect in Newtownards ; misunderstandings removed—peace and love prevailing. This day, a blessed season in the forenoon preaching, and administering the Lord's Supper. In the evening, the chapel could scarcely hold the congregation.

22. Never felt more insufficient even to think a good thought, and my body much fatigued from the labours of the week. Never saw more of the strength of Christ made perfect in weakness. An uncommon number attended the Lord's Supper. During the sermon, and the whole season of administration, there was one universal display of the Lord's goodness.

March 13. Retired before God to note my abundant cause of thankfulness for family mercies and deliverances, together with the gracious support and encouragement afforded in the path of duty ; and to implore such help as our Lord saw his work and my weakness now required. I had written to Mr. Alexander Mackay, of Antrim, a talented young man on our reserve list, to solicit his services, but it was extremely difficult for him to comply, because of the opposition of his wealthy relatives. On writing to him the second time, he came immediately, in the true spirit of sacrifice, having intentionally "sold all" that he might follow Jesus. Thus was my way prepared to pursue my applications for Portaferry, and other important openings, for extending the work in Belfast and elsewhere.

My respected colleague Mr. Smith, was the same man of God as when we travelled and laboured together on the Waterford circuit, but we had not the same delightful opportunities for personal intercourse, nor did he attend our sacramental meetings, his prejudices preventing; which was much to his own disadvantage, and that of our people, for he would have excelled at that heavenly employment. But, with great simplicity and faithfulness, he would publish the times of administration for his "Brother Lanktree!"

April 12. We had probably 200 communicants at the Lord's Supper near Ballyhalbert; and on the 19th, a surprising season of the converting power of God, after Mr. Mackay's preaching in Quintinbay. Many were filled with consolation, and glorified the grace of God with joyful lips.

March 21. Captain William K——, a son of many prayers, who had been trading to America, and living without God, was brought to the knowledge of himself and the Redeemer in a singular manner. When but a lad, he had an awful dream of the tremendous day of judgment. He imagined he saw the "Lord Jesus revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." He felt that to be his case, whilst the fiery deluge was rolling on. Looking all around, he saw no place of safety, but heard a voice calling aloud, "Flee to Quintinbay and you will find a refuge." This dream he had forgotten, until he heard William Savage tell what the Lord had done for his soul since they had parted. All at once it recurred to his memory, attended with a deep conviction of his guilt and danger. In deep distress he hastened to Quintinbay—was encouraged to call upon the Lord, and obtained mercy. He shortly after returned to America, has held on his gracious course, and become a useful local preacher.

As the summer advanced, I was much engaged, and much encouraged, in making collections, and preaching in various places which could not be reached in my ordinary line of duty; and, through the good hand of my God upon me, much was done in a preparatory way for Missionary labours, through the interesting barony of the Ards, and sundry other parts of the County Down. Generally where I called, the Gospel was respected. Were the inhabitants of this country in possession of that salvation which the Gospel holds forth, with their present industrious and decent habits, there would be few to excel them in respectability and domestic happiness.

June 14th. We had a high day near the Ballyhalbert shore. An enclosure was prepared with spars and sails, supposed to contain 1500 persons, which was insufficient for the congregation. Mr. Mackay preached in the forenoon, from Galatians iv. 4, 5, the redemption which is in Jesus. I then administered the "dear memorials of his dying love" to nearly 200 persons.

In the afternoon, the willing multitude was again addressed by Mr. M'Afee, from Daniel v. 27, and Mr. Mackay, from Rom. xiv. 17.

I trust, when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, many will have cause to glorify him for that day.

CHAPTER XIX.

1818-19.

WHEN preparing the account of our numbers at the close of this year, we had to lament the departure of some friends in Belfast, once dear to us in the Lord, who had now formed themselves into a separate Society. We lost also a small Society in Newtownbreda, which met in the house of my prophetic friend, Joseph M'Cracken. Another in Holywood, and a few persons in Ballymacarrett. Notwithstanding, we had only a decrease of fifteen members from the last returns ; whilst the Mission, under Mr. Hill's ministry, produced an increase of nearly two hundred.

The Rev. John Gaulter was our President, and Mr. Smith, Secretary this year. We had a general decrease in the aggregate of our numbers, which was accounted for in the Minutes, "Partly by the rending of some circuits since last Conference, partly by emigration to the Canadas and other places, and partly by the afflicting ravages of typhus fever. From one circuit alone, 120 emigrated, and about 100 died." In the address to England, it is added—"Certain persons, influenced by motives best known to themselves, have misrepresented our designs, and have unhappily succeeded in rending our Connexion. On this account, together with the extraordinary pressure of the times, our pecuniary embarrassments have been greatly increased, and difficulties of the most serious kind are presented to our view."

The character of the deceased Mr. Johnson was drawn with fidelity. "In him were united diligence and zeal in his ministerial duties ; fidelity and affection in his domestic relations ; benevolence and sympathy for the

afflicted and wretched ; and a pure and ardent devotedness to God, seldom equalled in Society.

“ He entered on the ministry in 1797, and died in August last, in the full assurance of hope.” I may add, that Mr. Johnson was the first preacher to strengthen my hands when I stood alone, after administering the Lord’s Supper on Coleraine circuit. He was a man of a superior mind, and an excellent preacher.

Messrs. Averell and old Joseph Armstrong withdrew from our Connexion ; but the body of preachers, notwithstanding all they were made to feel and fear, cleaved to the Lord and each other. We had now little more than two-thirds of our people to support the general work. We had already suffered many privations ; future prospects were gloomy, and our present resources scanty ; but still we could believe that God was with us, and rejoiced in hope, that after “ sowing in tears we should reap in joy.”

At my own request, I was appointed to labour this year on the Ards Mission, with Mr. Hill. On my return home, I wrote as follows :—“ I am now, according to my desire, engaged in a sort of new relation to the church of God ; and trust I shall obtain mercy to be faithful. Never did I behold the ministerial office in such a desirable or delightful point of view, with all its responsibilities and eternal interests. May my Lord, who holds the mystic stars in his right hand, enlighten, uphold, and direct all my movements to his glory and the salvation of souls !”

In the instructions to Missionaries employed by the Wesleyan Conferences, “ it is *peremptorily required* of every Missionary in our Connexion, to keep a journal, and to send to the Committee, frequently, such abstracts as may give a full and particular account of his labours, success and prospects. He is also required to give such

details, of a religious kind, as may be generally interesting to the friends of Missions at home ; particularly accounts of conversions. Only we recommend to you, not to allow yourselves, under the influence of religious joy, to give any *high colouring* of facts ; but always to write such accounts as you would not dislike to see return in print to the place where the facts reported may have occurred."

With this fundamental recommendation before me, I shall select such extracts from my journal, and correspondence with the Missionary Committee, as will, I trust, be interesting to the friends of Missions, and which I shall rejoice to see returning in print to all the places where the alleged facts have occurred.

A general view of our field of labour, and plan of proceeding, is contained in the following extract of a letter to the Rev. Joseph Taylor, Mission House, London. Dated Newtownards, 9th December, 1818.

" Dear Brother,—I sit down to inform you of the present state of the Ards Mission and Missionaries ; a subject in which I am at present peculiarly interested. This is the twenty-fifth year of my itinerant labours ; and brother Hill, my colleague, is ' a son in the Gospel.' I have been stationed, for the last three years, on the Belfast circuit, with the country part of which our Mission ground is closely connected. My intimacy with Mr. Hill, and the children God has graciously given him in this country last year, was more than ordinary. Two Societies from the Belfast circuit have been added since Conference, on account of their convenience. In Portaferry, where we have a very poor Society, there is a small chapel, which, with vast toil, I got nearly rebuilt before Conference. My family is in Newtownards, a central spot ; from whence, if you turn to the map of Ireland, you can trace

our line of labour round the small peninsula, including the Copeland Isle, and parts of Killinchy on the other side of the lake.

“ Last August we had ten classes on our circuit, containing 240 members, to which we have since added two new ones; one of them doing remarkably well, and those formed last year are increasing, notwithstanding several removals. Respecting their spiritual state, I can say to the glory of God, considering their standing, generally speaking, I never saw more genuine piety in any part of Ireland, than among them. Lately, at a love-feast, as many spoke as time would admit; and all were happy in “ Him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood.” Shortly after, at the Lord’s Supper in Portaferry, such was the holy influence which rested on the assembly, I could scarcely, for a season, perform the sacred office; whilst I felt, with my dear fellow-labourer, that whatever we may be called to do or suffer in this good cause,

“ ’Tis worth living for this,
To administer bliss,
And salvation in Jesus’ name.’

“ At this sacrament, we had two converted Catholics; one of whom is now a leader; the other is a widow, whose husband died in the Lord; both the fruit of the Mission. We have many instances of saving conversion to the knowledge of Christ, from a state of great profligacy; some are brought to God from infidel connexions, one of whom is beginning to instruct others with considerable success,

“ In pursuing our arduous ministry through this country, we have to contend with many deep-rooted prejudices—with Pharisaic pride and open impiety; but there are many things favourable to our progress. There is a remarkable spirit of hearing; and the discernible change in the morals

of the people where we have formed Societies, powerfully recommends the preaching by which it is effected.

“ We deem it best not to extend our labours farther than we can follow them up by forming Societies, and watch over them in the Lord.

“ While the season remained favourable, we held large meetings almost every Lord’s day in the open air, which were exceedingly owned of God. In conducting these, we choose a central spot, where a field pulpit, after the manner of the old Covenanters, is erected—by two cars or carts being placed near each other, with the wheels inside. A door is laid on the axletrees for a platform. A winnowing cloth, or sail, drawn over the shafts, serves for a tent; and a board, over which a quilt is drawn, placed on the back rails, serves for a cushion for our Bible, and a front for our pulpit. On these occasions, we preach, perhaps, two sermons, exhort, &c. to great multitudes; and the gracious impressions thus made, open the way for our extended labours through the country.

“ Praying that the spirit of our living Head may abundantly rest on all who are engaged in the labours and support of the glorious Gospel of God our Saviour, at home and abroad.

I am, dear brother, yours in Him,

M. L.”

A few extracts from my journal will illustrate the above statement.

Aug. 13. After an interesting visit to the Copeland Isle, preaching, visiting, &c., administered the Lord’s Supper to Robert Emberson and friends. It was a most solemn and affecting season. Robert, his wife, parents and children all weeping together. His were “ the tears that delight, the sighs that waft to heaven!” Sept. 11. Visited him again—found him rejoicing in hope; but the

most emaciated living skeleton I ever saw. His family and friends deeply affected. I addressed them, as I thought he would, if able. The following Lord's day, I was called to attend his funeral in Donaghadee, and thought to have preached his funeral sermon in our chapel, but the crowd was immense. I therefore preached in the church-yard, from Rev. xiv. 13; trust fruit will follow unto eternal life. Were it only for the grace of God bestowed upon this man, through Missionary labour, what a glorious prospect does it present in the day of Christ!*

Sept. 18. Lord's day, Mr. Hill and I held a love-feast in Ballyeasbro'. I preached at eleven o'clock, from 1 Pet. ii. 7, "Unto you that believe, he is precious." We had a large meeting. Probably one hundred persons spoke for God—all happy in him. The simplicity, diversity, and divine wisdom which ran through their experience, gave delightful evidence that they were taught of God. My own soul largely partook of divine consolation.

Shortly after this, a complication of afflictive circumstances rolled on me, in consequence of the severe illness of my wife, and a variety of other causes, which made it extremely difficult to give myself to the work of God in the manner it demanded, and that my soul longed for. In the crisis of my perplexities, Mr. Smith, my late colleague, called at our house; we were not complaining, but he saw and felt for our situation. When at prayer, he was impressively led to plead with God, and urge the promises he had given to encourage his people to trust in him without reserve. The application to my own soul was so impressive, that I could have no doubt but it was from the blessed Comforter, and therefore noted it in my journal. Adored be the Lord, from that period, such were

the suitable, the seasonable, the extraordinary interpositions of Providence to myself and family during the remainder of the year, that I can find no language so fit to give them expression as those of the prophet—"There shall be showers of blessing." We were left under peculiar obligations to confide in divine goodness—the work of God on the Mission was rapidly progressive, and every account we heard from other parts of Ireland, brought good tidings of the spread of religion. Thus did the old year depart, and the new year 1819 commence. Blessed be God!

Jan. 23. Visited Drumardin, near Cloghey, through continued storms—these are often fatal to the shipping along these coasts, where *wrecking* is a public curse. The family where I lodged, though homely, is respectable in many respects. Hans Potter, the father, is a well-read, sensible man. The daughters, especially Mary and Margaret, deeply pious. All are industrious. They have a dear farm; but they weave, spin, &c.; they are frugal, affectionate, hospitable, and have abundance. Hans, though not in Society, is a kind friend, and bears an honourable testimony to the advantages derived from our preaching in this country. Since that time, he observes a change in the morals of the people, such as he had not witnessed for forty years. Let this work go forward, and wrecking, smuggling, drunkenness, and every evil work, will soon disappear from the whole community.

Feb. 11. Rode to Ballyminstra, Killinchy parish, and preached to a most unwieldy congregation in James Morrison's, from Jer. vi. 16; then read and explained the rules of our Society. A rough looking man, named Stewart, interrupted me, but was soon silenced. Next morning, I preached again, and formed a small Society; James Morrison, and all his family, having set the example. God be praised for that beginning! It has been a goodly plant of his own planting.

April 7. Preached in Ballymaleddy, near Comber, and formed a small Society in John M'Dowell's, which has also promised fruit to the glory of God.

16. Preached in Mr. James M'Dowell's Ballyeasbro'. Neither the heavy rain, the bad road, or dark night, prevented a crowd of attentive hearers from attending. Formed another Society of ten persons. There were earnest cries for mercy. I dismissed them several times before they went away finally. A blessed work of God appears to be breaking out in this neighbourhood.

18. Had an opportunity of preaching on the Lord's day morning, to the lively people of Quintinbay. Commenced at ten o'clock, 2 Cor. v. 7. The word was applied with power. Then met the whole Society, assisted by Wm. Savage; it was one of the best meetings of the kind I ever witnessed. All, excepting perhaps two or three persons, were clear in their evidence of salvation by grace. They are now about fifty in number. What hath God wrought here within the last three years!

23. Got to the Copeland Isle with much difficulty. Visited every house. Preached, I suppose, to all the inhabitants, and some strangers. My subject, 2 Cor. v. 10. A remarkable shipwreck occurred here a few nights since. By means of our friends, the whole crew, who were clinging to the rigging after the vessel struck and went down, were brought to shore, and treated with the utmost tenderness. The ungrateful captain, when in drink, imputed theft to his benefactors, which I examined very particularly. He was obliged to retract, and say, "he had nothing against them more than against the child unborn." A good cause and a good conscience, can stand the test.

May 4. Preached in Mr. Pollock's Magherascouse, where I had been a few times before, and formed a small Society under very pleasing circumstances.

In the course of a few weeks visited Newrv. Down-

patrick, and a few other places, and have had a kind invitation to Glasgow. I have seen much cause to bless God for these excursions, but desire the Lord in tender love to prepare my way, and accompany me wherever he is pleased to direct.

9. Invited by Mr. David Waugh to Belfast. I preached at ten o'clock in the large chapel, from 1 John iv. 16. Again at 12, in Cotton-court, Phil. iii. 8. The softening power of God deeply felt. Then distributed the sacred emblems of redeeming love, to about 130 communicants. Truly God waited to be gracious. Showers of tears were shed around the railing! "Are they not in thy bottle?" Once more, according to my usual plan here, preached in the large chapel, from Isa. liii. 11. My heart was greatly enlarged, and my mouth opened. Returned to my own circuit much comforted.

10. Repaired to a new place, called Craigantlet, Holywood hills, and preached in John Hueston's. A frightful dream roused him to a temporary earnestness, which induced him to invite the preachers; the word of life did not fall to the ground, but became the power of God to the salvation of some precious souls. A Society was formed; and the Gospel is still received there in the loving spirit which itself creates.

June 6. Lord's day, Mr. Hill met me in Newtownards, that we might administer the Lord's Supper. He preached, and very judiciously explained the nature and design of the institution, to a crowded assembly, the largest I have seen here on such an occasion. The divine presence was felt at the first table in an overwhelming manner. Robert Morrison, a young man from Ballyminstra, was so deeply affected, as to be unable to partake of the elements without my help. Previously, he had been earnestly seeking redemption through the blood of Jesus, and he now found repose in his atonement.

When the congregation was about to withdraw, I inquired how he felt his mind ; he was, indeed, like a vessel wanting vent, and immediately began to magnify the grace of God, in an extacy of praise and thanksgiving. This led to a penitents meeting, which was graciously owned of God, and many, I am persuaded, will remember that day with gratitude in a blessed eternity. The principal part of the congregation had been but lately gathered into the fold of Christ.

Shortly after this meeting, the report was circulated about Killinchy, that Robert Morrison had become insane ; for he was constantly speaking of what the Lord had done for him, and of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. This induced several of his friends to visit him, some from curiosity, and some by way of condolence with the family. But his alleged madness became infectious ; they were deeply convinced of sin ; then commenced calling on the name of the Lord for salvation, to which they were encouraged by seeing his happy state. They continued in prayer, and were also blessed with pardon and peace ; and thus the holy flame began to spread through the country very extensively.

The concluding labours of our ministerial year, were crowned with grace, mercy, and peace. Lord's day, June 20th, we held a sacramental meeting in Ballyfrench, in the open air. Mr. Hill was there before me, and had a most commodious awning prepared. It was composed of oars, sails, &c. At eleven o'clock, he preached from Rev. i. 5 ; and I administered the Lord's Supper to 162 communicants. It was indeed a eucharistic feast ; a season of holy joy and spiritual refreshment. We concluded at three o'clock, and resumed at five, when I preached from Psa. xxxii. 7. After much exhortation and prayer, Mr. Hill concluded, by an address from Acts xx. 32. " And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word

of his grace," &c. After which, the preacher and people wept together, until I constrained him to leave them ; when we retired for the night to Mr. Bailey's hospitable mansion, Ballyhalbert.

On the 23d, our district meeting commenced in Belfast, and was conducted with great love and fidelity. I believe there is nothing in the Christian world to equal our strictness respecting character. But what is this when compared to the final day ! Solemn, delightful thought !

I had several respectful applications to remove to other circuits, particularly Newry and Portadown ; but did not see my way clear. It was also the opinion of the brethren, that to return to the Ards was the order of Providence. My parental feelings were deeply affected by the congratulations of the chairman, Mr. Smith, respecting my eldest son, who he expected would shortly be one of our talented preachers. My mercies abounded beyond all expression or conception !

Mr. Hill and I returned and made final arrangements to go together to Dublin. We were able to return 330 members from our Mission, most of them happy in God their Saviour.

We proceeded together, and held meetings in Newcastle and Portaferry on the 27th ; then parted from our most affectionate people, crossed the ferry, and rode through Downpatrick and Castlewellan to Newry : the mountains of Mourne presented a curious scenery on our left. The road was heavy, but our hearts were cheerful.

Next day we were joined by Mr. Murdoch, my old friend, who accompanied us to Drogheda. The conversation delightfully various and profitable. When we put up our horses, a Mr. Mayne, who lived in the " Wooden House," which has since then been demolished,

invited us to join with several more of our brethren, whom he had assembled to take refreshment. My Cousin, James Lanktree, provided us with lodging, and next day we proceeded to Dublin.

My good friends, the Crawford's, New-street, in their usual cordial, Christian spirit, received me in the Lord, and we rejoiced together in all the good things his gracious Providence had wrought for us, and for his people.

July 1. Our Conference opened at six o'clock. The first sitting much favoured with the divine influence. The reading of the sympathizing and consolatory address from our English brethren, and the speeches of our President, the Rev. Messrs. Jonathan Edmonson and George Marsden, breathing the same spirit, and stating our grounds of encouragement from what they had seen of the success of the work of God among us, during their visit to Ireland, afforded delightful matter for increasing gratitude.

We proceeded in our Conference work very rapidly—no stain on any character. The private Christian parties I attended were edifying; and the sermons much owned of God. The unction of the Holy Ghost descended copiously on our assemblies, when my dear brother Hill, and our other young brethren, were received into full connexion. Our financial affairs were considerably improved; and our aggregate numbers showed an increase of 3,528 members. In balancing our accounts, however, we had to meet a deficiency of no less than £1200, by a fresh taxation of ourselves. My private note on the occasion was, "The Lord whom I serve, brought me through the last year, and, he is all-sufficient for the present also; blessed be his name!"

CHAPTER XX.

1819-20-21.

THE general Missionary meeting, where young Summerfield spoke with an astonishing display of Christian oratory, and our Conference love-feast, crowned our jubilee, with renewed evidences of the loving-kindness and tender mercies of our God.

I returned to the Ards Mission, with Mr. Robert Wilson for my colleague. Previously to entering on my regular labours, I visited Scotland, accompanied by Mr. Thomas Kerr; by the particular request of the brethren in Glasgow, sanctioned by our Conference.

Accordingly, on the 21st of July, we launched from Belfast, in the Sir William Wallace Steamer, leaving a number of our friends, and hundreds of spectators on the quay. We were soon in the open channel, keeping the Waterloo steam-vessel, belonging to Mr. George Langtry, Belfast, now sailing for the first time to Liverpool, in view, until the evening, when we lost sight of her, and of Ireland.

“The sea was calm, and skies were clear;” whilst the swift motion of the steamer, urging her majestic course through the great deep, making it “boil like a cauldron,” leaving after its course a current of white foam for a great distance, was surprisingly agreeable.

We were soon, however, checked, by the steam being exhausted from one of the furnaces, which was but imperfectly restored. Mr. Kerr, was sea-sick the whole passage. I was severely so, for a short time, but soon recovered, so as to rest a little until day light.

Went on the deck before the rising of the sun. It was delightful to view his first beams shining upon the Island of Bute, and then his rising glories over sea and land. The curious elevated Craig of Ailsa remained long in sight; next appeared the numerous encircling mountains and coasts of Scotland. Then successively, Combray, Largs, Clough light-house, Gourock, and Greenock—a fine town, with good docks, full of shipping, steamers, &c. As we proceeded, Helensburgh, Port-Glasgow, Dumbarton rock, castle and town, made their appearance. We then proceeded up the river *Clyde*, amidst most picturesque scenery, of houses, farms, boats, &c., until the city of Glasgow terminated the prospect. We landed at half an hour before one.

A few young men who were in waiting, conducted us to the house of the Rev. Alexander Bell, the resident minister,* who received us with great kindness. Mr. Kerr soon went to his lodging, and Mr. Bell conducted me through part of the city, and introduced me to several friends. All here was perfectly new to me, and appeared grand and beautiful. It seemed to me that Mr. Kerr and I were singular in the eyes of our Scotch friends. Our blue, single-breasted coats, and very plain appearance, excited more than ordinary attention, as we walked the streets, and on our first appearance in company.

Mr. Burdsal, the superintendent preacher, was gone

* Hitherto I have not attached the word *Reverend* to the names of my *Irish* brethren, however appropriate; because we were not in the habit of encouraging, or applying to each other that honorary epithet. From this time, however, it became customary; not from any agreement among ourselves, (for I never remember to have heard the subject discussed, either in the Conference or out of it), but from the courtesy of the country, and our more frequent intercourse with the English preachers, among whom it became general.

to the British Conference, and his house was to be my home; but as Mrs. Burdsal was at the shore with her family, I felt that I was *a stranger in Glasgow*, until she returned. I found her a friendly, well-informed, Christian woman. Her hospitality added considerably to my comfort, and banished my lonely feelings. I now got access to Mr. Burdsal's library; but had little time to profit by the great variety of valuable works it contained, especially as my lodging was soon altered to Mr. Lashley's, Candlerigg-street, where I was most kindly entertained whilst I continued in town; and where, I trust, the Lord wrought graciously, during my stay, on the heart of Mrs. Lashley's sister.

The first place in which I preached, was the old chapel, John-street, where I enforced the important duty of Christians praying for their ministers, 2 Thess. iii. 1. I felt gracious freedom. Mr. Kerr and I attended their leaders' meeting after preaching. They met in a vestry, or small chapel, with a gallery. I suppose there were forty stewards and leaders present. Mr. Bell presided.

Lord's day, 25th. Commenced my ministrations in Tradestown chapel, which is large and commodious. At eleven o'clock, preached from John xiv. 16. The extensive chapel, with the numerous and strange faces, appeared at first a little formidable: but I was engaged *with* and *for* God, which soon reduced my apprehensions, and made my work delightful.

Took a little refreshment at one, and preached at two in John-street chapel. Here was another large and respectable congregation. My subject, Gen. v. 24. I was graciously helped, but felt the heat most oppressive. While preaching, I perspired most copiously, which had a good effect. At six, preached again in Hamilton-street chapel, exceedingly large and commodious. A convenient room invited to devotion, and a small door, which opened

into the pulpit, introduced me to a numerous and attentive congregation, whom I addressed with all my heart, from the affecting words of our Lord, Luke xix. 41, 42, applicable to most large cities, as well as Jerusalem. After sermon, I related some of the good things which our Lord had wrought for us during the past year in Ireland. A prayer-meeting followed, attended with a heavenly refreshing influence. When this meeting was dismissed, I was conducted by an old woman to baptize an infant. Thus ended the public duties of the day, which I found much sanctified to my own soul.

28th. Miss S—— invited me to visit one of our Lord's poor saints, Janet Simon. She was greatly afflicted, and greatly saved. Miss S—— found her in a state of absolute destitution in a cellar, with only rats for her companions. Her affliction was induced by an extraordinary accident; she was going to milk a cow, after she had incautiously thrust a number of pins somehow into her bosom; the cow kicked, and threw her down, then trampled the pins into her side, which brought on a dangerous inflammation. The medical gentlemen had extracted a number of them, but many seemed to remain. She was bled 156 times to keep down inflammation, yet was so far recovered as to be able to sit up in her bed, and read her Bible and hymn-book, and so continued for some years a monument of mercy. She had learned much in the school of affliction, and attained to an exalted measure of the mind of her suffering Master. She is visited by Christians of various denominations, for their spiritual advantage. Happy Janet, thy sufferings are working for thee "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!"

This evening, proceeded with Mr. Bell to preach in Glasgow Green. We took our stand under a large spreading tree, called by the Methodists *Mr. Taylor's*

tree; from the many times that Mr. Thomas Taylor had preached there. Mr. Bell sung and prayed, and I preached from the joyful experience of the Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts. viii. 39. We then returned to Hamilton-street chapel, where I preached again, on the inexcusable state of those who are sinning against the clear light of the Gospel, John xv. 22; and Mr. Bell assisted by earnest prayer.

29. Dined with Mr. Thomson, where Mr. Kerr is lodged, in company with the preachers. After which we went to the Broomielaw, or quay, where Mr. Kerr prayed, and I preached to probably 1000 persons. The pressure of the times, and the public distress and discontent, so general at present in this city, induced me to choose for my subject, the apostle's popular argument to recommend the Gospel, 1 Tim. iv. 8, "Godliness is profitable for all things." The poorer classes heard with deep attention, the rich, in general, walked quietly past. This was a precious opportunity. I retired to bed, feverish in body, but happy in having spent my strength for my Master.

Aug. 1, Lord's day. It was published by placards, that Mr. Kerr and I were to preach in each of the chapels, and collections to be made for the trustee interest. I commenced in Hamilton-street chapel, at eleven o'clock, urging that great Gospel privilege, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 5. In Trades-town, on "the only name given among men whereby we can be saved," Acts iv. 12. And in John-street, at six, on the great requisition of the law, "The love of God and our neighbour," Matt. xxii. 37, &c. Were it only for the blessed opportunities afforded this day, of proclaiming so extensively the redemption which is in Jesus, I bless God for my having come to Scotland. Truly this Sabbath was a day of pure spiritual delight; "and the holy of the Lord, honourable."

2d. Mr. Kerr and I went in the morning to attend an examination of Miss S——'s school, consisting of 50 female children. They were well taught in the Holy Scriptures, and could repeat the whole of the paraphrases with one voice. In the evening, we went to see the Glasgow weavers at their new employment. Being without work, and in deep distress, they assembled in a great multitude, and appealed to the Provost for redress. The magistrates took their case into consideration, gave them tools, spades, shovels, &c., and engaged them to cut a trench through Glasgow Green, for a common sewer. They also published a conciliatory address, and allowed, if I mistake not, the young men one shilling per day, and married men, one and sixpence. Hundreds of them were this day employed; some of them indeed most awkwardly, and thousands more looking on. The scene was interesting; and I considered the plan of affording them employment and wages, to have reflected much credit on the wisdom and benevolence of the gentlemen who carried it into effect.

In the evening, preached in Tradestown chapel, then assisted Mr. Kerr, who was addressing the people on the Broomielaw. Many were much affected, and pressed on us to shake hands, in the most kind and respectful manner. This was our best season in the open air: probably we had fifteen hundred hearers.

3d. Went with a friend to the Museum, where I spent two hours. One of the professors, a polite gentleman, attended, and gave us much information. The multiplicity of objects, and the shortness of our stay, prevented accurate observation. The various productions of nature and art were numerous and astonishing. I was particularly struck with the vast number of coins, medals, and precious stones. Among the anatomical preservations, they have *the throat of a thief*. He had stolen half-a-

crown, and, when detected, endeavouring to swallow his ill-gotten gain, it stuck fast, and he was choked. The professor cut out the throat just as it was, with the coin made visible through a deep cross-cut, as a warning to others.

In the evening, assisted Mr. Bell to hold a love-feast in Parkhead. The experience of those who spoke, as several persons did freely, was instructive; richly displaying the grace and providence of God. It might be truly said, "the shout of a king was among them."

4th. At seven in the evening, Mr. Kerr and I went to Glasgow Green, one of the most suitable places I ever saw for field preaching: we probably had 2000 hearers. I preached, and the Lord applied the word. My subject was the "Great white throne, and him that sat thereon," &c. We then adjourned to the chapel, Hamilton-street, where Mr. Kerr addressed about one-half of the former assembly, from Acts viii. 35. It was a season from which I expect we shall see good fruit in the great day.

5th. We dined in the country, in Mr. Sword's, where the celebrated Doctor Chalmers favoured us with his company. The conversation turned on some of those topics which he has so ably treated in his "Civic Economy." At Mr. Sword's request, we gave him a relation of the gracious work going forward in Ireland. The Doctor enjoyed it much, and questioned us closely respecting its genuine and Scriptural characters. After two agreeable hours he departed. We closed this happy opportunity by reading the Scriptures, singing, and prayer.

6th. Went with Mr. Bell to visit the Magdalene Asylum. Its matron is from Dublin, and well acquainted with many of our old Methodist friends there. When we went into the place "where prayer is wont to be made," the inmates assembled, and sat round the room, thirty-eight in number; they were neatly dressed in clean

white bedgowns and aprons. Each had a good Bible and hymn-book on her lap. I read Isaiah, the first chapter, spoke a few words, and Mr. Bell prayed. I felt, as I believe heaven does, greatly interested for their salvation. Their rooms were all remarkably clean, and some of them even ornamented. The establishment is retired, elegant, and useful, beyond all praise. I am informed that the pious ministers of Glasgow frequently attend to afford instruction.

The Lunatic Asylum became next an object of curiosity. We did not see the patients; but were waited on by an obliging female, and shown all the apartments above and below, which were exceedingly commodious. The centre of this fine fabric is ornamented with curious circular stairs, rising elegantly to a considerable height. No gratuity is allowed to be given to servants, but a box is suspended in the hall with this inscription:—

“If disposed to help this Institution, put your donation beneath. And He who seeth in secret will reward thee openly.”

Our next visit was to the Institution for the instruction of the deaf and dumb. We did not go in, but saw many of them at play, and conversing curiously with their fingers.

In the evening, had a solemn time preaching in John-street. Having to baptize a child, I chose for my subject Joshua's resolution, chap. xxiv. 15.

7. Visited Paisley, eight miles from Glasgow. Mr. Rawson, the preacher, was waiting for my arrival. Felt much at home with him and pious wife. They are very plain Christians, and deeply serious. We walked round this ancient and not unpleasant town, said to contain 50,000 inhabitants; and abounding in places of worship. It has not hitherto been the most productive soil for the growth of Methodism. We have a good chapel here, but deeply in debt.

8th. Lord's day, preached at eleven o'clock, to a good congregation, for the place, from that ardent prayer of Habakkuk, so often used, and so needful for our day, "O Lord, revive thy work!" Felt it a gracious quickening time. Preached again at half-past two, to an increasing congregation; after which I baptized an infant publicly. In the evening at six, addressed the same congregation, and closed with a special charge respecting the evils consequent on attending the races, which were about to commence the coming week. This was to me a day of much comfort and profit. Saw a number of my countrymen and women, some of whom had fled from persecution—even from Buncrana, County Derry!

9th. Returned to Glasgow. Dined with Captain Saunderson, a gentleman to whom, and his friends, Christ appeared to be "all and in all." Mr. Kerr went to preach at the Broomielaw in the evening, and I preached in Tradestown, to what appeared to be a congregation of above 1000 children and young people. The under part of the house was crowded with youth, and the gallery with adults. Felt special need of help from above, to address both to edification. I chose the promise of our Covenant God, to his people and their offspring, Isa. xliii. 1, 2, 3, and was favoured with sweet liberty. All was still as night during my address. The close of the meeting was solemn, and I trust the promised blessing will follow.

10th. Devoted this day principally to taking leave of my friends in Glasgow, especially Miss S——, and the amiable family of the Balbirneys, to whose friendship, as well as many others of my most hospitable Scotch brethren, I feel much indebted.

During the day, I visited again the Magdalene Asylum, and preached to these returning sinners from the portion of Scripture which adorns the hall—"There is joy in

the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth !”

This was the most affecting season I saw since my coming to the city. I commended them to the friend of sinners, and left them universally bathed in tears !

Mr. Kerr having gone to Kirkintilloch, and my duties at home demanding my immediate departure, I entered the *Rob Roy* steamer, at eight o'clock in the morning ; and though wind and tide opposed, we proceeded most pleasantly along the Clyde, into the open channel. There were seventeen gentlemen together—the ladies having a separate cabin. The company was very agreeable. We had also a valuable library, of which I availed myself to read Henderson's *Iceland*. At eight o'clock, next morning, the 12th, arrived in Belfast, and, in a few hours, reached Newtownards, where I found all my family in perfect health and safety ; for which I adore our gracious Preserver.

Having resumed my regular ministry, I found my colleague an affectionate lively preacher : much intent on the conversion of sinners. And it pleased God to give us souls for our hire, though our principal work was to edify believers, rather than too widely extend our sphere of operation. We had a good and happy year ; and had also the comfort of seeing our circuit so far matured, as to be united to the regular societies around, and thus form the Donaghadee and Newtownards circuit, while Belfast was prepared to become a complete residence for two preachers.

Our congregations, in Comber, were now very large ; and it became a matter of importance to endeavour to build a chapel. The old Marquis of Londonderry was respectfully addressed on the subject, who gave us a grant of suitable ground. When we proposed to solicit subscriptions, we convened a select meeting of the gentlemen of the town, who generously came forward to our help,

in such a manner as yields me unfeigned pleasure to record. The Messrs. Andrew's, the Rev. George Birch, Church clergyman, and Dr. Allen, assisted to collect subscriptions, subscribed themselves, acted as a committee, and planned the most efficient way to procure money round the country. But notwithstanding these valuable helps, the weight of responsibility, toil and anxiety, rested on my mind, and became a heavy burden before all was finished.

In the course of the year, we made several attempts at preaching in Grey Abbey. I heard that they were very wicked, and mostly infidels; and if I preached there it would be at the risk of my life. I resolved, however, to make the trial; and that if they did me injury, there should be many witnesses. Accordingly, I preached several times in the burying ground attached to the abbey, to very numerous and inoffensive congregations. But we could not follow up our exertions, having no proper encouragement or house for preaching.

In the month of June, I was greatly comforted in seeing much, and hearing more, respecting the spiritual progress of my eldest son. Having been in the neighbourhood of Portaferry, he continued all night in company with William Savage, calling upon God, until he received the Spirit of adoption. - Being requested to pray in a public congregation, it proved a general blessing to the people. Shortly after he commenced preaching. None, but a father, engaged in the same work, could judge of my feelings.

At the Conference, 1820, although I could rejoice with those who had seen good in the last year, yet it was a season of deep exercise of mind. Nearly £2000 were to be met this year, while the mode of taxation fell most heavily on those who had large families, as they received most from the public funds. In our address to the

British Conference, the subject is mentioned in a chastened and deeply pious manner. "The state of Ireland is at present deplorable. The decline of commerce—depression of trade—want of employment, and, latterly, the sudden depression of the Banks in our Southern districts, have reduced the country to a state of almost unparalleled distress.

"With a cheerful acquiescence in the will of God, we still feel it our purpose to sustain every privation, and by our utmost efforts to uphold that good cause, which, through the blessing of Heaven, has been rendered so beneficial to thousands throughout the land; firmly persuaded, that our gracious Lord and Master will not forsake his own cause."

For my own part, I determined calmly to commit my way to God; and, in the path of duty, wait upon him who could alone afford deliverance.

This year, I was appointed singly to labour between Newtownards and Comber, with their vicinities. The south part of our Mission having been given to Donaghadee, now formed into a new circuit for one preacher.

On my return home, my soul was deeply impressed with the goodness of God. Myself—my family—my ministerial allotments—so many deliverances, when viewed in the light of the sanctuary, bowed down my spirit before God beyond expression. Adored be the God of our salvation!

Our congregations were now become so large in Comber, that we were under the necessity of renting a commodious room until the chapel should be built, which we endeavoured to forward as fast as possible.

Even in poor Bangor, we had promising appearances; in consequence of which, being deprived of the place we had rented for preaching, it was proposed to build a chapel. This proposal was encouraged by Mr. John Johnston,

of Lurgan, who, with his family were there at the time, for the advantage of sea-bathing. This place had been given off to the Donaghadee circuit; but Mr. David Waugh urged me to improve the opening which was then presented for extending the Mission in that place, and the advantages which were now presented for building. For although Colonel Ward, the proprietor of the town, frowned on us, an eligible spot was proposed for sale, and Mr. Johnston and family subscribed liberally to make the purchase. We had also good congregations, and we were on the best terms with the New Connexion Methodists, who have a large Society in Bangor, and willingly subscribed to the building. Under these circumstances, I was induced to engage, that I would forward according to my ability, the building of Bangor chapel, in addition to that of Comber.

This engagement, however, was one of those concerns of my life which I most seriously regret. Considering the depressed state of our public funds, and my consequent privations, with the sole care of the Mission; the attention due to my numerous family, some of whom were advancing to maturity; with all these, the attention required by Comber chapel, would have been more than sufficient. However, as I submitted to the yoke, I was compelled to bear the burden, and struggle the best way I could to obtain deliverance.

My first endeavour was to procure a preacher to help me with the labours of the Mission. Mr. Robert Lutton, a local preacher, was recommended for that purpose, who for a season was remarkably efficient and successful. While he remained with me, we had many souls converted to God. My next expedient was, when the walls of Comber chapel were at the square, to let the work rest until I had Bangor chapel finished. In the mean time, setting apart occasional days for seeking comfort, direction,

and support, from Him who giveth liberally without upbraiding. Often did my heart sink under the pressure of manifold temptations and exercises; and not unfrequently was it cheered and borne on the wings of hope above disappointment and fears, in anticipation of the final rest which remains to the people of God. On these occasions, I have noted for my own admonition, "If by the grace of God I can accomplish my present requirements, I need never shrink from future difficulties."

While attending the building of Bangor chapel, I saw so much kindness, and had such friendly intercourse with the new Connexion, that I resolved on an effort to re-unite them to our body. From this feeling, I addressed the following letter to their Conference, or yearly Assembly. Dated Newtownards, 3d April, 1821.

"Respected Brethren,—In consequence of the good understanding which has been for some time manifested between the Methodists of the New and Old Connexions in this country, attended with increasing confidence, and frequent expressions of desire by pious brethren, on both sides, for an entire re-union of interests and hearts in the fellowship and service of our adorable and common Lord Jesus; the writer of this address was induced to request a meeting of the principal members of both Societies in Bangor; which accordingly took place on the 19th of last month. This meeting was designed to be preparatory to a more full and definite discussion of the matter at our approaching Conferences. Expressions of brotherly love were reciprocal, and the result of the meeting was an unanimous resolution—'That the brethren of the New Connexion be requested, at their next yearly meeting, to deliberate on the importance of a re-union of both Connexions, according to such principles as the wisdom of united counsels shall decide to be most honourable to

the Christian cause, and the lasting unity, edification, and increase of all our Societies in every place.'

"By the request of that meeting, I lay the subject before you, beseeching the God of truth and love so to influence your deliberations thereon, as will be most for his own glory!

"Brethren, I anticipate the happiest consequences from a candid, serious, and liberal discussion of the matter thus providentially brought under your consideration. It is evident that there can be no earthly, interested, or selfish motive to influence this proposal; and it is equally manifest, that the proposed union in the Spirit of Christ, who alone can effect it, must be happily conducive to *the best interests* of preachers and people, in one common cause.

"Were not the Methodists raised up, as a people, to magnify the riches of divine grace by diffusing Scriptural religion throughout the world? Why should we be separate *bodies*, who are one in doctrine, experience, design, and general economy? Oh, let our hearts and hands be indissolubly one, and wholly engaged for our God and Saviour! Satan strove, by dividing, to destroy us: he raised mountains of prejudice, and barriers of human expediences between us, that we might never re-unite. But the God of peace is confounding Satan's devices. The principal difficulties are already removed; our affections are again flowing together, and will, I trust, be rapidly succeeded by a blessed fellowship in the labours and comforts of the Gospel, like mingled streams in a mighty river, fertilizing the world, and urging each other onward with increasing energy to the infinite eternal ocean of life and felicity.

"Let the main point be once settled, minor matters can be easily adjusted by deputations of judicious brethren chosen on each side; and let the result of their deliberations be communicated for the general information of all parties. This will eventually give satisfaction to reason-

able and pious people. It will stop the mouths of our enemies, and revive once more the ancient proverb, 'See how these CHRISTIANS love one another.'

"Thus far have I proceeded in this affair, guided principally by the convictions of my own mind, and what I considered to be the voice of *Providence*, though agreeable to the judgment and affectionate desires of several of my brethren in the ministry, of both Connexions, as well as leaders and members, with whom I have conversed on the subject. How far the proposal may meet the general concurrence of either communities, I know not. When your determination is known, I shall be better able to form a judgment how I may be called to act respecting it, at our ensuing district-meeting and Conference. In the mean time, let us pray that the mind of God may be truly known in reference to our future negotiations. This appears to be a favourable season for consolidating our interests, which, if lost, may never return with the same advantages.

"In bringing the matter forward, it has afforded me a present reward of peace and satisfaction of mind, which I consider a foretaste of greater blessings springing from its progress. May its final consummation bring the highest glory to God, and constrain friends and enemies to acknowledge with the Psalmist, 'Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion ; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore,' *Psa. cxxxiii.*

"I am, dear Brethren, yours in the bonds of a peaceful Gospel, and in the service of our common Lord, to whom be glory for ever !"

MATTHEW LANKTREE.

On the 20th of May, a deputation chosen by the New Connexion, met one chosen by me for the purpose of considering the proposal made in the above communication, viz., on their part Mr. Murray, from Moira; Black, Lisburn; Halliday, Bangor; Donaldson and Lyons, ministers. On ours, Shillington, Portadown; Murdoch, Deery, and myself; with Mr. Cobain. He and Mr. Black being there by courtesy. The meeting was held in Belfast. Mr. Murray commenced a most ungracious attack upon Mr. Murdoch at the very commencement, which prevented our even entering properly on the subject.

On their part, the principle of delegation to the Conference was to be secured, as the first point. We parted with expressions of mutual good-will, but gained nothing by our meeting, as to the object proposed.

24th of May. Whilst laying all my public and private concerns before the Lord, such calm peace and confidence, in the delivering grace of God, flowed into my heart, that I was constrained to say, "Am I deceived? Did the God of love ever give such discoveries of himself but to encourage his servants? Did he ever forsake, in the trying hour, those whom he thus encourages to *trust in him?*"

At our district meeting, my son was examined for the ministry, and unanimously recommended to the Conference. It was truly said, by the oldest preachers there, that they had never heard such pointed, scriptural answers, from any candidate. He had now attained his twenty-first year.

At this Conference, 1821, our public affairs wore a most gloomy aspect. Numbers and collections were deficient. The latter above £2,000. Addressing the British Conference on the subject, it is thus expressed:—"Our temporal embarrassments have not only become

inconvenient, but oppressive ; and it is only by an humble confidence, in the all-sufficient Jehovah, that we are preserved from those fears by which we should otherwise be overwhelmed. And yet, in all our sufferings, we can say, “ O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee ! ”

As to myself, all my refuge was the throne of grace, where my soul was most abundantly filled with peace and confidence. More particularly, after hearing our President, the Rev. Jabez Bunting, preach from Isaiah xliv. 21, “ O Israel ! thou shalt not be forgotten of me,” I was unutterably comforted. The discourse was calculated to encourage every child of God.

At the close of the Conference, I took a solitary walk to the suburbs, to visit an old friend, not in our Society, though solicitous to know our affairs ; for he had heard of some of our distresses, and felt much sympathy for our preachers. Having satisfied some of his inquiries, he handed me ten pounds, to dispose of as I judged proper, to assist a few of the brethren who most needed it to return to their circuits. This seasonable donation urged the gushing tears from my eyes. He was greatly affected. “ Ha ! ” said he, “ it was just in proper time.” But who was the donor ? It was Paul Johnson. However numerous may have been the aberrations of his judgment, Dr. Johnson, in many cases, to my knowledge, acted the part of the good Samaritan, “ when his eye affected his heart ” in the exercise of the healing art, and in his liberal donations, both to the cause and people of God.

Donaghadee, Newtownards, &c. were now formed into a *regular* circuit for two preachers. My station was called the Down Mission, of which Comber was to be the centre, for the convenience of building the chapel and extending the work of God.

On my return home, my heart overflowed with grati-

tude, on finding my dear wife, who had for several weeks been a subject of extraordinary pain and suffering, in a convalescent state; and that, notwithstanding our public and private difficulties, still we were encompassed with mercies.

Through the kind interference of Mr. Thomas Shillington, Portadown, and Mr. Johnston, Lurgan, I was in a great measure relieved from the burden of Bangor chapel, and was thus prepared to move to our new habitation in Mount Alexander, beside Comber. On that occasion, while viewing the deliverances wrought out for myself and family, as well as for our connexion in Ireland, I noted the event in my journal with no ordinary feeling and emphasis. "*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

1821-22-23-24.

WHEN entering on my labours on the Down Mission, my first attempt was to explore every part of the ground I was likely to occupy, and attend to those places where there was the greatest probability of success, especially about my head-quarters, where I had greatest encouragement.

During my two first years, I obtained the assistance of Messrs. Hobart and Price, from the reserve list, which enabled me to use my influence to procure subscriptions; to attend to various calls connected with our general work, and oversee the progress of the building. But when I most needed the labours of my efficient, but tem-

porary assistants, they were called away from me to supply the regular work, and I was left to labour alone, which greatly increased my difficulties. Under these trying circumstances, the goodness of God, in supporting my mind, and encouraging me to perseverance, was remarkable. Sometimes divine light would shine on my heart, banishing doubt, and cheering me with the prospect of final results. On some occasions, an act of generosity from an unexpected quarter, came, like Noah's dove, with an olive branch, and excited renewed diligence, which, under the guidance of Providence, seldom failed of success. An instance or two may encourage others; they will, at all events, enliven a heavy subject.

A friend conducted me to the apartments of an old lady in Belfast, who had money, provided a key could be procured to open her heart. On being introduced, I said, "We have made free to apply to you on a subject of charity." "Charity!" said she, "I want to hear nothing on that subject." I did not press it; but a large Bible lying on the table suggested a new thought. Opening it, I said, there are many precious promises in this blessed book, adapted to all our exigencies; how happy it must render us in every situation, to receive them from a gracious and faithful God, and live in a constant expectation of their fulfilment; for instance, "Even to your old age, I am he, and even to your hoar hairs will I carry you." This seemed very suitable to her wants, and created an interest. "Could you show me that promise in the Bible?" said she. "Certainly, here it is; Isaiah xlv. 4." Being convinced by *sight*, that it was certainly there, "Well," said she, "that promise is worth a pound note, and you shall have it."

When collecting for Bangor chapel, I called on Mr. John Gregg, Belfast, a gentleman famed for liberality. He was sitting beside his lady when I mentioned my

errand. Putting his hand in his pocket, he replied, "I will share what I have with you." He pulled out his notes, counted six pounds, and handed me three, with much placidity of manner. I remarked, when thanking him for his kindness, "Well, Mr. Gregg, you may expect a quick return for these notes;" his generosity having prompted the expression. "I declare, Mr. Lanktree," said he, "if you can establish that doctrine you need not fear but you will succeed."

The following year, when greatly pressed with Comber affairs, I addressed to him a few lines, saying, that I felt reluctant to apply to him so soon after his former subscription, the peculiarity of the present case being my apology: remarking, that in proof of the observation I had made to him on that former occasion, I had frequent opportunities of observing, that those persons who were in the habit of kindly and faithfully contributing, according to their ability, to a good cause, were those whom the Lord still supplied with the means of continuing to contribute: that if my remark were just, it would apply to him, and he could judge of its propriety. I then explained my present exigency, referring him to a friend who knew the circumstances. This was sufficient; in a few days he sent me four pounds! After all, how few will be persuaded to "honour the Lord with their substance;" and thus by devising liberal things, and acting accordingly, secure more abundantly the means of blessedness to themselves and others.

The Conference, 1822, was rendered a most gratifying and profitable season to me in many respects. As a parent, my eldest son had been exercising his ministry in Dublin, most acceptably. My eldest daughter placed in circumstances to receive and do much good; and a kind Providence over them all. As a disciple of Jesus, I enjoyed a rich participation in the blessings attendant on

the ministry of the Rev. George Marsden, our President, and Robert Newton, who accompanied him to Ireland. I felt a heavenly unction attending all our public and private services. Although I could not but feel, in common with my brethren, the pressure of our sinking finances, and diminished numbers, yet it was to me, and I am persuaded to most of my brethren, an extraordinary season of heavenly consolation. While considering what could be done to promote the work of God among us, the preachers were frequently melted into tears. The printed Minutes remark, "That at no period in the remembrance of the oldest brethren, did a more gracious influence of God rest upon our souls." The pecuniary aid sent us from our English brethren, proved a most seasonable blessing.

Our address to the British Conference breathed an admirable spirit, and gave a most affecting account of the condition to which our Western Counties were reduced, "by outrages, robberies, burnings and murders, with the effects upon our Societies, decreasing their numbers, and their aid towards the support of the Gospel—obliging whole families to emigrate to America, as their only place of refuge; in consequence of which, whole Societies have been dispersed." The protecting providence of God was signalized towards our preachers in those disturbed districts.

On my return to Comber, I laboured diligently with such help as Providence afforded, for several months, and saw the pleasure of the Lord prospering, in the spiritual concerns of the Mission. Through much difficulty, I was enabled to carry on the building until the chapel was prepared for worship.

On the 22d of December, it was formally opened. Messrs. Charles Mayne, and J. T. Mathews, having most kindly come over to our help. Though this was

the depth of winter, the weather proved favourable, and the chapel was crowded. Mr. Mayne commenced the services of the day, at half-past ten o'clock, by preaching from Rom. i. 16, with much pathos and power; and again at two o'clock, from Jude, third verse. Mr. Mathews preached at seven o'clock, from 1 Tim. ii. 5, a sermon which contained a body of divinity. The Messrs. Andrews assisted at the collection, which was considerable. This day was crowned with many blessings, for which I glorify God, who did not forsake or leave me comfortless through all this weighty concern; and now placed before me an open door for increased usefulness. Dr. Allen, our Treasurer, though not a member of our Society, stood by me to the last, with unflinching confidence, assisting with money, and sustaining with me every burden, until the affairs of the chapel were finally arranged.

The remainder of our year rolled on with little variety, until June the 8th, when I went to Belfast, to hear Dr. Clarke preach, on his arrival from Scotland. The large chapel was crowded to excess, and many were obliged to go away for want of room. His text was "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace," Job xxi. 22. It was a very plain, yet profound discourse, and warmly applied. On the following evening, the Doctor attended a large tea party, though he did not partake with us. At the close, he delivered a most instructive address, on the rise, progress, and present state of Methodism. He most impressively and convincingly delivered it as his testimony, that Methodism was now spreading wider and deeper than ever; and that it did not, according to his opinion, prosper equally in Scotland as elsewhere; because there it had lost its original character and design.

On the 20th, I set off in company with Mr. Mathews, in the Self-defence coach to Dublin. We had agreeable company, among whom religion was avowed and defended.

Another proof of the general diffusion of piety over the land.

We had a very numerous Conference: Dr. Clarke President. It was distinguished for much love, unity, and attention to business. This was the third year successively that we were decreasing in our numbers from sundry causes. Our financial deficiency was above £1200, and only to be met by renewed sacrifices.* The tender sympathy of Dr. Clarke, and the exact description he gave, though unintentionally, of my feelings, greatly softened and impressed my heart. The preaching of this excellent man, from John iv. 24, and Phil. i. 9—11, was much blessed to me and many of my brethren, as well as the dignity and love with which he presided. After Conference, I engaged the assistance of Mr. James Patterson, a son in the Gospel, and a pious, local preacher, who gave himself to the work; and the Lord in mercy continued his loving-kindness to us through the year. We were favoured with a visit from the Rev. Valentine Ward, who was deputed by the British Conference to establish Mission schools in various parts of Ireland. His preaching and cheering communications were very encouraging.

The following extract from my letter to the Missionary Secretary, dated the 24th of February, 1824, will serve to wind up my accounts of the Down Mission:—"In 1821, all the Mission Societies in the Ards, and those belonging to the Belfast circuit in that country, were formed into a regular circuit. Since then several of our people have emigrated to America, and some have passed through death to their eternal home, in triumph. It may with great truth be testified, that few revivals among us

* This was first rated at £10 each, but afterwards mitigated for the present year, through the Doctor's interference,

have stood better. And that probably no Mission in Ireland has been more productive of 'good fruit,' to the glory of the grace of God.

"A few places formerly attended by Mr. Bell were attached to Comber, and formed the out-post of the present Down Mission, to which I was appointed in 1821. One end proposed by this appointment was, that I might use my endeavours to finish the chapel which had been begun in Comber, but which was retarded by finishing the one begun in Bangor. For the sake of convenience, I removed my family to Comber, and since that period have had to contend with uncommon trials, chiefly from the attention I was obliged to give to the building, and the extreme difficulty of obtaining money to complete the work.

"When thus engaged, I endeavoured to supply my preaching place, by the labours of young men from the reserve list, or otherwise, as they could have been procured, to whom I became accountable, in a pecuniary way, from what I collected for the chapel. I am now favoured with the assistance of a pious and promising young man, Mr. James Patterson, a local preacher, from the Ards, who is a great blessing to the people, and a comfort to myself. I should not have been so embarrassed, but for the death of old Lord Londonderry, and afterwards of his son, the late Lord Castlereagh.

"It is with pleasure I now proceed to lay before you the present state of the Mission. In Comber and its immediate vicinity, we have about 80 members in Society. The chapel is remarkably well attended; and during the winter the congregations have been regularly increasing.

"Our last sacramental occasions were graciously favoured with the divine presence, and several broken hearts were healed and filled with consolation. Of late we have had many happy indications of approaching times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

“ In the parish of Killinchy, four miles distant, long famed for licentiousness, we have a Society in a place called Ballyminstra, which from its commencement has produced the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We also preach in the town of Killinchy to good congregations ; and, in Ardmillan, (otherwise called Little Sodom) we have preached to attentive crowds, who have hitherto shown us uniform kindness and attention.

“ In Saintfield, a considerable market-town, our way was so impeded by the shameful conduct of professors, that after many trials I gave it up for a season. At present, however, thanks be to God in consequence of a steady friend having removed thither, we have succeeded to form a Society, whose members are likely to adorn the Gospel. Ballynahinch is another large town, in nearly similar circumstances, and from the same causes. Here also we have at present large congregations. Beyond this is a country place called Comberbridge, where we have an increasing Society and a prospect of extensive usefulness. Four miles farther, and sixteen from Comber, is Seaford, where our people had been scattered in “ the dark and cloudy day.” Here we have a lovely Society, and a spirit of unity and love is blessedly increasing. We preach in various other places, not mentioned, with the prospect of shortly forming Societies.

“ This is a populous country, composed very much of the middle classes of society, remarkably intelligent and industrious. The majority of them are Presbyterians ; many of them ; as well as their ministers, Arians. Their prejudices against Methodism are greatly diminished, so that we have but seldom to preach to small congregations. I cannot state after all, that ‘ the fields are white to the harvest ;’ but in several places, where the good seed has been sown, it has sprung up, and much has been done ‘ to prepare the way of the Lord ’

“ There are a few pious ministers in different places to erect the standard of the cross, and promote sundry plans of usefulness. Sabbath-schools and general scriptural education are increasing rapidly. Still, it is to be lamented, that infidelity and immorality are not excluded from the country. They are, however, frequently assailed by the prevailing influence of truth, and many sinners are converted from the error of their ways, to the spirit of the Gospel.

“ It is a matter of vast importance to a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus, when labouring in this country, and in the meek and lowly spirit of his Master, coming to seek and to save the lost, that many of the earliest and best prejudices of the population are favourable to Christian institutions, and the discussion of religious subjects. The sacredness of the Scriptures, the sanctity of the Lord's day, respect for pious ministers, public worship, family worship, and catechizing of children, are still venerated. Many have heard of the power of the Holy Ghost, which was witnessed by their pious ancestors in former times ; and these are always interesting topics to bring home to their hearts.

“ Now appears the time, above any that I have ever known, for the zealous labours of the Methodist Missionaries through the North of Ireland. Our Lord has set before us an open door ; and it is he who has said, “ Let no man take thy crown.” Does not the spirit of hearing, so remarkably general, call for the frequent and powerful preaching of the whole truth of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God ? The desire for reading prove the importance of supplying the country with a rich supply of pious books and tracts ? And is not the zeal for scriptural education a public demand for our active exertions in that important department of usefulness to the rising generation ? Your hearts have devised good upon this subject.

May your school system, now in its birth, be attended with the blessing of Jehovah in its rise, progress, and increase! * * *

“ With most respectful regards to the Committee,

I am, dear Brother,

Yours in the the Lord Jesus,

MATTHEW LANKTREE.”

I had a letter from my old friend and brother, Ousley, bearing date April 7, 1824, which gives such a testimony to his former colleague, Mr. Graham, lately called to his eternal rest, as should comfort and cheer the servants of our Lord, who are still in their state of probation:—

“ My dear Brother Lanktree,—I have just come from the country, and heard that our good and greatly beloved brother, Graham, has a day or two since fled to that fair world of light and love after which he had so long panted, and to arrive at which he laboured day and night. And what a labourer was he! But the time of rest is come. Yes; he has just gone a little before us. Oh! what days of the Son of Man have he and I seen together! But a blessed eternity is at hand, and there all the ship’s company meet, never again to part.

“ I am still supported, as when young, thank God. I labour much in the streets also. Yesterday I rode twenty-two miles, preached in the morning in Cavan, in Ballyjamesduff market at one, to a vast crowd, and last night in Kells. This day I rode to Dublin, thirty-two miles, and am not a whit the worse.”

Attended the district meeting in Belfast, June 17th, where Mr. Patterson, being recommended by two leader’s meetings, was unanimously chosen, after a very close and satisfactory examination, as a fit candidate for the ministry. Several preachers said this was the happiest year they ever spent. So mercifully does our God give peace after

trouble, and bruise Satan beneath our feet. Adored be his goodness!

June 25th. *Our Conference opened, as usual, by earnest and mighty prayer, accompanied by the unction of the Holy Spirit. The principal feature of our work during the day, was the reception of young men recommended as candidates for the ministry. Fifteen were proposed and twelve accepted, among whom was James Patterson, who was also taken into the work immediately.

The ministry of our President, the Rev. Henry Moore, and English visitants, Messrs. R. Newton, Joseph Taylor, and V. Ward, was much blessed to the public, and their advice and influence in the Conference truly important. By the beneficence of our English friends and brethren, assisting our own regular and *extraordinary* exertions, our deficiencies were considerably lessened, and the hope of better days blessedly revived.

The general Missionary meeting was most interesting. The Lord's Supper, in Abbey-street, greatly crowded; but by far too hastily administered for my satisfaction. How strangely are things altered in Dublin! What unspeakable prospects of grace and glory are set before us as a people, providing we follow on, walking in the light of the Lord!

The Down Mission was now merged into the regular work, attached to the Downpatrick circuit, and I was appointed to the Ballymena Mission with Mr. Cobain. On my return home, I went immediately to Ballymena to meet Mr. Ousley, and settle sundry important matters; then visited the most necessary parts of my late Mission circuit, preached to crowded weeping audiences, whom I commended to the care of the great Shepherd, and on the 29th reached my new station in mercy, with my numerous family.

CHAPTER XXII.

1824-25-26-27.

THE field of labour to which Ballymena was the centre, was one of vast magnitude; embracing a considerable portion of the Counties of Antrim and Derry, including several towns and villages, besides mountains and glens, where preaching had already been established, or which were accessible to the zealous faithful Missionary. I was not left, however, to labour without an appointed colleague, as on the four preceding years. Mr. Cobain, my fellow-labourer, had been on the circuit the past year; this was a great advantage. He was a good preacher, and a zealous, affectionate brother, with a mind formed for friendship. Our families lived near each other, and were much united. No small comfort this to Methodist preachers, when sojourning among strangers.

On my first and second tour round the circuit, I was thankful to find a few Societies doing well, and good congregations; but the general state of the country, in a spiritual sense, resembled the valley of vision presented to the prophet Ezekiel—"Behold, there were very many in the open valley, and, lo! they were very dry." In the neighbourhood of Kilrea, I found, by particular inquiry, that not less than eleven Societies had been lost and scattered within a few years, which must have numbered above two hundred members! Several of our best preachers had laboured here, but their ministry did not reach their case. Probably they had been too hastily collected into Societies, and had not the advantages of judicious leaders, and Scriptural, patient instruction in righteousness, when formed into classes; hence, their first

impressions became like the morning cloud, or early dew, and they reverted to their former, and even worse habits, with a few happy exceptions.

Ballymena, our head-quarters, was an important thriving town, referred to in the early part of my Narrative—a place where much had been done, and much public money expended, to support and forward the cause of Methodism, but hitherto with small returns. Mr. Ousley had built a chapel, and house for the preacher, now very much out of repair, and the congregations and Society were small. It was here, however, we began to see the first encouraging indications of a revival.

These were principally among the youthful part of our congregation, and appeared to have been much forwarded by the happy death of their oldest leader, Thomas Moore. I was intimately acquainted with him when on the Coleraine circuit, in 1796, and since my return, visited him frequently in his affliction; always with pleasure and increased advantage to myself. His “chamber” was, indeed, a “privileged” place. On Saturday evening, the 4th of September, the mortal conflict seemed to be closed, and he evinced a most heavenly frame and aspect. Pain having subsided, the holy tranquillity of his soul beamed forth from his countenance, and he fell asleep in Jesus, about two o’clock on the Sabbath morning. He feared God from his youth; adorned the Gospel thirty-five years; above thirty of these he was a leader in this town.

His funeral sermon, from Phil. i. 21, was very much felt by the congregation, and, as if his mantle had fallen on the young people who knew him, several of them joined the Society shortly after, and began to run well for the prize of their high calling. A few of our old friends, also, who had fallen by their iniquities, or withdrawn from the Society, were restored by grace.

In Bellaghey, we had opened to us a blessed door of

usefulness ; also in Castledawson and Magherafelt, where we had the first Mission school ever established in our Irish stations. Here the Lord began to pour out his Spirit in the conversion of souls.

In my first communication with the Missionary Committee this year, I remarked—" Amidst discouragements, my worthy colleague and I are now frequently favoured with large congregations, and an increase to the Societies, hearty invitations, and calls to new places. We have gracious visits from the God of Missionaries ; souls born from above, and a few removed to the rest which remains to the people of God.

" We strove, according to our ability, to attend to those calls, by preaching in numerous new places, though, in so doing, we were obliged to supply others by substitutes. To endeavour to reach the lost sheep about Kilrea, I preached in the street on public occasions, and followed the openings that occurred, which multiplied our labours far beyond our strength. In addition to these exertions, at the earnest request of the Dublin preachers, who addressed us on the subject, we went to Cookstown, and preached there regularly until the next Conference. This town has a neat chapel, which had been wrested from us by those who thought ' to do God service,' by opposing the admission of the Lord's Supper, but it was recently restored, in consequence of a reference to counsel. The congregation was small, but the place important.

" From the vast accumulation of labour, and what appeared to me the great necessity of improving fully the blessed advantages afforded, I strove, by all proper application to the Dublin preachers, and Missionary Committee, to procure help, but in that way it could not be obtained. There was, however, another way, and we succeeded, blessed be God ! We prayed ' the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers.' He was pleased

‘to give the word,’ and we were well, and seasonably supplied with preachers.

In the first instance, Mr. John Peters, who had previously embraced our doctrinal views, joined our Society, became one of our mission schoolmasters, and greatly helped us by preaching Christ, and a full salvation in his name, in the neighbourhood of Carnlea, Clough, and sundry places in that direction.

In Castledawson, Mr. Saul came to our assistance, (being then a revenue officer,) and proved a zealous labourer in the Lord’s vineyard. From this time the work of grace progressed most delightfully. On the 19th of June, 1825, I noted in my journal—“At eleven o’clock, I preached in the school-house, well fitted up by our dear friends for the occasion; my subject, John xiv. 27. Out of about 300 hearers, 200 returned to the love-feast. It was a season of holy refreshing and divine power. I numbered at least eighteen, who testified of their participation of pardon during the past quarter; and of these, perhaps, the one-half were young persons in their tender years.” Here, also, God raised us up another local preacher, George Keewan.

In Magherafelt, we preached in the school-house—an inconvenient place, in a narrow lane. But the Lord did not despise the day of small things, nor withhold his presence and blessing. The schoolmaster, Mr. James Seymour, preached the word in several places; and here Mr. Andrew Campbell, now a Church clergyman, son to my old colleague, began most acceptably to exercise his preaching talents, and a spirit of zeal and diligence in holding forth the word of life rested generally and graciously upon our public characters. This town, from its relative situation, began then to assume the station it has since acquired, of being the head of a mission station.

Bellaghey had frequent visitations of mercy; its little

thatched house of worship became quite too small, souls were converted, and the providence of God made preparation for the increase, by directing to a larger place where they might extend the cause of the Redeemer.

These were the principal, but not the *only* places where the Lord revived his work, and raised us help to carry it on. We formed a new Society in Carnlea, where souls were converted to God; another in Mount Alta, Mr. Crommellin's new colony. We commenced a promising Sabbath-school in Ballymena; and, I might say, laboured on until nature was nearly exhausted.

We were favoured this year with most cheering letters from Mr. Morley, the Missionary Secretary; had pleasant and useful visits from Mr. Bewly, the agent for our Mission Schools, and closed our ministerial year with much consolation to our own souls.

After attending our district meeting in Belfast, I took the coach for Dublin, bringing my wife to see her relatives in Cork, where the Conference was to assemble for the first time this year. About an hour after our arrival in Dublin, several dear friends came to present their cordial salutations. We thanked God and were encouraged. Lord's day, the 3d, I had the opportunity of preaching in Dublin, and the privilege of hearing the celebrated Mr. Robert Newton twice. At eleven o'clock, in Abbey-street, he addressed a vast congregation from Luke xv. 10. When representing the joy of angels over a penitent sinner, he displayed a specimen of sacred oratory, exceeding perhaps any that I have heard; it was strikingly sublime, and suited to the subject, yet all was natural and expressed with ease. I judged, however, that the *effect* would have been much greater, had some of his inferences been omitted, to follow up the powerful impression made on the congregation at an early part of his application. He preached again in Whitefriar-street chapel, then

beautifully repaired, from Heb. xiii. 9. I computed that there were about 2000 persons packed into the chapel, and many had to go away for want of room. He concluded a long and most instructive sermon, by a pious declaration that he preached in that close, practical manner, for the public good—that when he viewed eternity he was never pleased with his own sermons; and showed how unavailing every thing regarding preaching and hearing would appear at the day of Christ, unless we possessed that “good thing,” having “the heart established by grace.”

We arrived in Cork on the evening of the 6th without any remarkable incident. Mr. Stopford, Cove-street, was waiting to receive us, in whose hospitable house we found a delightful retreat after the fatigues of our journey. We were then informed why we were not met by our dear Matthew. He was confined by a serious illness in Bandon, and not able to come to Cork.

After the opening of Conference, I hastened to see my son, where I stayed, and preached twice on the Lord's day, in the commodious and lovely chapel, and felt it an humbling and gracious season.

I was much profited by the Society of our excellent friends during my short stay in Bandon. Leaving my son, now apparently better, in charge of his mother, I returned to Conference in time for the examination of the characters, which were passed through without any blot on any man. Felt through this Conference an uncommonly deep sense of God upon my mind—a sacred solemnity, accompanied with heavenly consolation, and the joy of hope. I was frequently called on to address the throne of heavenly grace, and preached twice: it was “good for me to draw near unto God.” But the season most worthy of remark was the Conference love-feast, where several of the preachers spoke freely of the grace

and mercy of God. "The goings of Jehovah were seen in the sanctuary," and the flame of holy love ran through the assembly. The testimony of old Mr. George Howe was singularly interesting. To describe the man and his manner adequately, were difficult, whilst he arose, almost blind, resting his large body on two walking sticks, his manly intelligent countenance expressive of holy delight, whilst with a voice awful and sonorous, he bore his living testimony to a "well-witnessed Gospel." "Had I," said he, "a thousand hearts and a thousand tongues, they should be engaged to love and proclaim my lovely Jesus! Jesus is all, and in all. Here I have firm footing. Methodism is from heaven, and leads to heaven. Methodism is *Gospelism*. Glory be to God that I have seen this day! Here I am surrounded by men of God, who are born from the skies. It was through them that God lighted my candle, and kept it lighting. By them I was delivered from blind guides, and man-made ministers. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! This is a high day with me—my happiest day! I am here, on my little hill of Zion, surrounded by the sons and daughters of Zion. Yes; by Britain's sons, and Erin's sons; hosanna, hosanna, to my last breath," &c. Whilst he spoke, he was greatly affected; and before he concluded the whole congregation were dissolved in tears.

When Conference concluded, I returned to Bandon, and found my son improving; but Miss B——, his intended bride, was alarmingly ill. This afflictive dispensation greatly exercised my mind, and excited my tenderest sympathies during the week. I felt for her as for a child, and waited the event until Saturday. She discovered a resigned and happy state of mind under much pain and affliction. During my stay I did what I could to administer consolation, but was necessitated to return to the numerous charge I had left at home. deeply im-

pressed with the Christian love we had experienced among our dear friends in every place.

The most curious circumstance which occurred on our return, was the conduct of a Priest in Watergrasshill, not far from Cork. While the horses were being changed, he came forward to the caravan, and appeared mad with rage against the Bible, and the Kildare-street plan of education. He addressed us all, as if he were certain we were all of his mind and party, or to set us at defiance, and spoke on without leaving a moment to reply. "See there," said he, pointing to a man who came forward at his call—"See there is a greater hero than Alexander. The Kildare-street Protestants wanted to proselyte his children; but he nobly resisted, and took them away. Aye, they want to proselyte us, by sending their cobblers and tailors, &c., and their Bibles, and bits of tracts; but they can't do it. *We* are the successors of Christ. They can't compare with *ME*! I have seven schools which excel all their schools. They can't speak with me! I have conversed with the Duke of Orleans. I can try them in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, &c. I would soon settle these emissaries. I would have two men with swords to their nose, when they stand up to speak," &c. After this talk, my mind was painfully exercised, viewing the miserable state of our land, now so generally under such bitter Antichristian intolerance. May the Holy and Righteous Governor of the world, deliver the people of Ireland from all such teachers!

Mr. George M'Elwain was now appointed for my colleague, in the place of Mr. Cobain. The first post after my arrival at home, brought my son's account of the death of the amiable Miss B——. He closed her eyes! May the Lord be glorified in all his dispensations to me and mine!

Shortly after, my dear bereaved son came to see us,

being but slowly recovering, and directed by the physicians to take a long journey. He was appointed to the Skibbereen circuit. This evening, Aug. 14, he preached an appropriate and delightful sermon, from John xiv. 2, 3. My soul blessed God for such doctrine—for such a preacher—and for such a son! During this visit, his preaching and conversation were made very useful in Ballymena.

Sept. 1, was our financial district-meeting, Belfast; a season of renewed encouragement, respecting the improvement in our temporal resources for supporting the work of God, and of private consolation and strength to my own soul. We had a visit, while here, from Mr. Nowell, a preacher from Glasgow, who came across the channel for the good of his health. I was struck with his serious spiritual conversation. He informed us, that his grandfather was converted when above eighty years of age; and that he himself is a Methodist of the fourth generation.

4th. My son preached from 1 Tim. iii. 16, in Ballymena, and assisted at the administration of the Lord's Supper, which was a remarkably blessed time; and in the evening, he displayed the excellence of the perfections and government of Jehovah, from Psa. xcvi. 1, 2, to a noble congregation. My soul rejoiced, and glorified God for the gifts bestowed upon him for the manifestation of his own glory.

An extract of a letter, which I sent to Mr. Morley on the state of our Mission, dated 6th October, will discover the progress of the work up to that date:—

“My dear Sir,—You will perceive by the enclosed return, that there has been a gradual improvement during the last quarter. A few of the most favourable appearances I shall just mention:—

“1. Our Sabbath-schools have had a good effect. In Ballymena we formed one last summer, which has been

well attended by the teachers, and many extremely ignorant and destitute children are receiving instruction. In Bellaghey, the same cause is producing still happier effects. Several of the scholars are joining the Society, and becoming the subjects of a gracious work. The day schools are doing well.

"2. In Castledawson we have been favoured with the labours of Mr. Saul, a young man in the revenue, a local preacher. From the first day he arrived there he was made useful. Many, through his instrumentality, have been brought into Society, and are truly converted to the Lord. Upwards of fifty young people are meeting in different classes, and many of them are happy in God. In that neighbourhood, generally, a revival of religion is apparent. The congregations are large and attentive, and a regenerating influence has gone forth. Several have borne testimony, both in word and deed, to the sanctifying efficacy of the blood of Christ.

"We held a large meeting here on the 25th of September. Having no chapel, we had recourse to a sort of tent or enclosure. The pulpit, and other preparations, were temporary, but the presence and blessing of Jehovah were powerfully felt. The text, Luke ii. 14, was applied to the hearts of the numerous assembly by the Holy Spirit; and many, with joyful lips, bore testimony to the word of his grace. Upwards of 200 persons attended the love-feast, at the close of which, the pardoning mercy of God our Saviour was richly dispensed, which several afterwards freely acknowledged.

"3. I need scarcely add, we have much labour, and many calls to which we cannot pay attention. My colleague is a very plain, regular, attentive preacher; but we want exceedingly a young man as a helper, without a horse, who would run into every open door, and teach and preach the Lord Jesus."

Again I addressed him on the 5th of January, 1826.

“ Although we have not so many conversions to record as in my last return, the work of the Lord has been regularly progressive in the principal places of our extended Mission. We have three new classes formed, and many demands for our ministry with which we are unable to comply. The prospect of good to our young people and children is most encouraging. Our schools are doing remarkably well. I shall lay all the particulars before Mr. Edwards, who I doubt not will prove a general blessing as superintendent of the Mission schools.

“ The Lord has set before us an open door of usefulness. May he thrust out labourers to the important work! May those who are engaged therein obtain mercy to be faithful!

“ We want chapels, especially in Bellaghey, Magherafelt, and Castledawson. We want thousands of tracts and catechisms; we want useful books for our schoolmasters; but our principal want is ‘the supply of the Spirit of Jesus;’ and for this we claim your prayers,” &c.

I had two communications from Mr. Morley this winter, in both of which he mentions the intentions of the Committee, to send my son as a Missionary to Palestine.

December 3d. He observes—“ I understand that your son Matthew has some thoughts of devoting himself to the Missionary work abroad. His classical attainments and his knowledge of medicine, as well as his piety, zeal, and general talents, would qualify him to be a useful Missionary to Palestine. I have written to him on the subject. Probably he will consult you. It is not for me to say what advice you should give him. But I may say, that if he were my son, and if I were in your place, I should advise him to offer his services to the Committee, or rather to accept the call which they give him. If he do, I am persuaded that neither he nor you will ever have

cause to repent of it." Again, January 18th, 1826. "We look forward to the time when your son will be taken on the list of foreign Missionaries. We have reason to believe he will be quite as comfortable, and probably more useful than he is at present; at least, he will go to a people more destitute of the means of instruction."

This negotiation was broken off, and the intended Mission to Palestine postponed, in consequence of a rupture between the native chiefs. But previously to this obstacle being known, I wrote to him from the fullness of my heart. I have no copy of that letter, but the impressions made on my heart, drew forth one of its most ardent effusions. That it should even have been a matter of negotiation to send *my son* to *preach* JESUS in *Palestine*, where the Saviour of the world, and mine, preached, lived, and died, and rose again! brought such associations of thought to my mind, as cannot be described, and could only be surpassed by *seeing him as he is*—that "blessed hope," which the unhallowed passions of men cannot frustrate!

The first day of the present year, 1826, we sanctified unto the God of all grace, to praise and glorify his name for all the loving-kindness and tender mercies we had witnessed and felt. On that occasion, I preached in the forenoon from Psa. ciii. 2, met and questioned the children of Sabbath-school in Ballymena, and again preached in the evening from 1 Sam. vii. 12, with blessed recollections and happy effects.

On the 26th of April, I was enabled to send the following notice to the Mission-house, London:—

"It has pleased the Lord to bless our endeavours during the last quarter also. We have thirty-six of an increase to our Societies, and a few souls have been made the subjects of a work of grace. Several young men have been more fully engaged in carrying on the work of

God, in meeting classes, holding prayer-meetings, attending Sabbath-schools, &c.; and some are preparing, I trust, to be more extensively useful by preaching the Gospel. Nothing, however, has been more remarkable, than the provision made, in several most necessitous places, for accommodating our increasing congregations. School-houses, sessions-houses, meeting-houses, &c., have been given in the most kind and seasonable manner.

“ In Magherafelt, ground has been obtained from Sir Robert Bateson, for building a chapel and school-house. In Castledawson, collections are in forwardness for building a chapel; and in Bellaghey, we have purchased a house, which can be readily fitted up to hold a large congregation. If the openings which are now presented, be faithfully attended to, I look forward to a general spread of pure religion throughout this mission.

“ We have, at least, 600 children under Sabbath-school and catechetical instruction, including those in our three Mission schools, of which I shall probably send you a specific return in my next.

“ We have many demands for schoolmasters, which I need not specify, as I suppose Mr. Edwards will be explicit on the subject. This, I would however impress on the minds of our dear friends and brethren composing the Committee, as the result of my most deliberate judgment and experience—*Cultivate the Mission field in the North of Ireland; give schoolmasters; send us plenty of books for them and the children*, and you will, with the blessing of heaven, see fruit above any thing you have yet seen in Ireland.”

May 3. Our annual district-meeting was held in Coleraine, and conducted with great promptitude; no charge against any brother. Our finances improved, so as to meet every demand. Mr. T. N. Hull, son of Major Hull, of Donaghadee, was examined for the

ministry, and highly approved. He is a "son of consolation," worthy of his excellent mother!

May 18th. Being invited to assist in opening the Billy chapel, which has at length been finished, principally through the prayers of Mrs. M'Curdy, and the extra exertions of the Rev. C. Mayne, and Mr. John Martin, we went up together from Coleraine, with much joy, to engage in that delightful task. At eleven o'clock, I preached from Haggai ii. 9, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mr. Mayne followed, from Zech. vi. 12, 13. After which, the Lord's Supper was administered to about 150 communicants. Mr. Gilman concluded the services of the day, from Psalm xxvi. 8. It was altogether a precious season. The unction of the Holy Spirit attended the word preached: The Lord's table was approached with holy delight, and many abundantly rejoiced before God. Whilst comparing the former times with the present, what changes have occurred since I left this circuit, in 1815! But the Lord reigneth, and his kingdom is hastening. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

July 3. Our Conference opened in Dublin, eighty-eight preachers present:—the Rev. Joseph Entwistle President; who was accompanied by Messrs. Jonathan Barker, and George Morley, from England. There appeared a prevailing feeling of holiness and happiness among us, notwithstanding much close dealing. The general state of our finances was improved, being forwarded by the liberality of our brethren in England, and the system of finance they have encouraged us to establish.

The reception of our young men, who had so creditably filled up their four years of trial, as well as their private examinations, had, with *me* at least, a peculiar interest—my own son being of the number, and another of them the son of my former much-esteemed colleague, Mr. William

Wilson. The cordial reception of Mr. Saul, whom I so strongly recommended to Conference, was another gratifying circumstance, which was greatly increased by his being appointed to travel and labour with Mr. M'Elwain and myself, on the Derry and Antrim Mission.

We had, through our Irish Connexion, an increase of a few hundreds—upwards of one hundred of whom are on our own Mission. Once more, therefore, I record my grateful acknowledgments to the blessed God, whose watchful Providence, and great goodness to me and mine, even during the year past, can only be made fully known in eternity, and expressed in the language of immortal praise. It was no small addition to my comfort, as a preacher and a parent, that my son was appointed to labour so near me as on the Belfast circuit, with Mr. Reilly.

We had now three preachers regularly appointed to labour together. In narrating briefly the results, I shall begin by stating our mode of proceeding. Having laid down our general plan, we were careful to meet frequently together, to read over our journals, converse about the best method of forwarding our work, and of rendering mutual assistance; always concluding by imploring the divine blessing. This method kept us alive to what was required, and cherished the spirit of our ministry.

We were also careful to meet the leaders, and endeavoured to keep every man in his place. With the local preachers we had more concern. Some of these, we had reason to conclude, were advancing beyond their proper calling: that in their attempts at preaching, they were not accompanied by the good feeling, or agreeing judgments of the most judicious and pious of our people. To remedy these defects, we adopted a plan which happily succeeded, and which, I believe, was sanctioned by our blessed Master. We appointed meetings in different

parts of the circuit, where we required them to preach, generally two each time, where we could hear them ourselves. We then proceeded to judge, candidly and faithfully, every man's sermon, gifts, experience, fruit, &c., as the case required: informed each of the judgment we had formed; and then sanctioned or admonished him accordingly. The result was, the spiritually-minded and gifted brethren were confirmed and encouraged, and the self-sufficient humbled or deterred.

We were particularly attentive to the improvement of the day-schools, as well as Sabbath-schools. There was another mode of catechetical instruction which I adopted in many places, and can best speak from my own experience of its efficacy, particularly where we had small congregations, and most leisure. I entreated the parents to send out the children and young persons, and I would endeavour to instruct them in the knowledge of God's Word. Selecting an appropriate portion of Scripture, I requested them to commit it to memory; when this was done, on my return, not unfrequently I preached from the passage so committed, then questioned them, to try whether they understood what had been thus explained, which was often the case beyond expectation. This led to such remarks as proved useful to themselves and their parents, created an interest in others, and increased the congregation; perhaps led to the formation of Sabbath-schools, or forwarded their interests where already established. I never knew this mode of instruction fruitless.

Street and field preaching were sometimes resorted to with the happiest effects, especially where we could not find proper accommodations in any other way; and, as it regarded our own people, we always found that conscientious publishing for the Lord's Supper—preaching on the subject—and duly attending to that sacred ordinance, kept the doctrine of the cross, in all its healing, humbling,

happy influence, fresh upon our own hearts, as well as of those who communicated. The hours and moments thus spent with them, were nearly allied to heaven.

While thus pursuing the ordinary and extraordinary duties of the Mission, our labours were crowned with the divine benediction, which rendered difficulties and discouragements light and momentary. On the 12th of November, we opened our new chapel in Bellaghey. My son preached at 11 o'clock, with great power, from Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. Mr. Saul followed at two, from 1 Thess. i. 5, and in the evening I discoursed from Ps. xcvi. 9. We had overflowing congregations, and the presence and blessing of our covenant God were richly manifested. A combination of circumstances made this a memorable day to my own soul.

Emigration from the neighbourhood of Castledawson began to thin our happy Societies. In Magherafelt, the Priest forced the Catholic children from our school; in Randalstown, the inspector closed the school-house against our preaching. The Catholic children were removed from the Sabbath-school in Ballymena, though several of them returned, and said their parents wished them to read the Bible. We had many petty annoyances, but they were surmounted, or overruled for good.

The tenacity of the Priests, in using their influence and stern authority in opposition to Protestantism at this time, is not a matter of surprise; it was the era of controversy and discussion—of conflict between truth and error. Truth was prevailing—many professed their open disavowal of the dogmas of Popery, and, doubtless, many more privately felt the influence of truth upon their hearts, who were waiting for a favourable opportunity to escape from Babylon, and stand forth the Lord's witnesses. There were several controversial sermons preached in Belfast and Ballymena, and several places around were

signalized by this sort of warfare. Not merely ministers, but laymen, became trained for public controversy, and challenged each other to combat. Early in the spring of 1827, this was the case in Desertmartin. Three Protestants, two of whom were reformed from Popery, and three Romanists, arranged a plan for discussing some of the points at issue between them. They agreed to meet in the school-house, which could not contain all who were anxious to hear. They adjourned, in consequence, to the old church, which had no glazed windows; and, notwithstanding the coldness of the night, they engaged in the controversy, and continued to discuss the points in debate, in right good temper, until three o'clock next morning, Dr. Mardock being President:—then shook hands, and departed in a friendly manner.

A few days after this, I had a long conversation with a sensible Catholic, who had been lately hearing a celebrated Priest preach against the Church of England, to a vast concourse of people. His candour was remarkable. He was disgusted against the avarice of many of the Priests. Several of their exactions he mentioned; and inveighed particularly at their hatred of Protestant schools, from which they were compelling their people to remove their children, whilst they offered them nothing valuable in return.

The grand public discussion for that country, took place in Ballymena, on the 24th, 25th, and 26th, of July, this year, between the Rev. R. Stewart, Broughshane, and Priest M'Auley, which has been long since before the public in print.

I was present, except for about an hour or two, during the whole of this interesting debate. There was certainly much talent discovered on both sides; and the close was, in my judgment, favourable to Mr. Stewart and his cause. Yet I was thankful for the unexpected discoveries of

sound principle, on several occasions held forth by the avowed champion for Popery.

These discussions, and controversial sermons, had not the most favourable tendency to many of our hearers. Plain, practical truth, applied to the heart, seemed to have lost its influence—the unconverted ran after novelties, were full of controversy, ready for debate, and too many, I apprehend, having given their assent to the leading doctrines embraced by the Reformation, rested short of the saving power of the Gospel—"faith working by love."

During the close of our year, I had very heavy affliction in my family; but so much the more did the Lord magnify his goodness, and send forth his healing virtue. This was a critical year with regard to my family; several of my children were from home, and frequently would my heart be nearly overpowered with solicitude on their account. This was particularly the case, when I was riding home one night much distressed, thinking of their absence and their interests, when a sudden, but sweet and powerful impression was made on my mind, as if some friendly voice had spoken to my heart, assuring me of their well-being, which at once freed me from anxiety, and filled me with joy and thanksgiving to God. I found, on reaching home, various letters confirmatory of that intimation. How little are we acquainted, either with ourselves, or our connexion with the invisible world!

"Who can tell what fervent blessing—
Angels, did ye hear it rise?
Did ye thus your love expressing
Watch o'er human sympathies?

Do ye some mysterious token
To the kindred bosom bear?
And to what the heart has spoken
Wake a chord responsive there?

- Laws, perhaps, *unknown*, but *certain*,
Kindred spirits may control ;
But what hand can lift the curtain
And reveal the mighty whole?"

The visits of Mr. Edwards, the superintendent of our Mission-schools, were much blessed wherever he called, and particularly to myself and family. He often lodged with us, where we had opportunity of witnessing his extraordinary devotedness to prayer ; his ministerial fidelity ; his conscientious attention to the interest of the schools ; his respectful tender affection to me, to all—the stamp of holy love on his whole character, I remember with gratitude to God, and his faithful servant.

With regard to my fellow-labourers ; I trust we lived in love, and laboured for God. Mr. McElwain pursued the even tenor of his way. Mr. Saul was the devoted, zealous, diligent business man, whose head, heart, and hand, were incessantly and successfully employed for God.

In concluding my retrospect of this year, I have no adequate words to express the Lord's goodness in conducting myself and brethren through such a variety of labours. In the last summer, we took in Antrim, Crumlin, &c. into our plan, added several new places, particularly Ballyronan, where we were kindly treated by the Messrs. Gausen. We raised a few new classes, saw several souls converted to God, and added near one hundred members to the circuit. We left four day schools attached to the Mission. Mrs. Gausen patronized and supported another conducted in the same manner. Another was commenced in Bellaghey new chapel, which was under our inspection ; besides the flourishing Sabbath-school in Ballymena, and several others. Perhaps we had one thousand children, and young people, under different modes of instruction in the things belonging to their peace. A number of young men were prepared to carry on the work in their

respective departments, and a field of pastoral labour was prepared for two distinct Mission circuits at the approaching Conference. Nor can I take leave of this subject without recalling the pleasing, solemn, happy seasons I have spent among that kind-hearted people; ministering to the old and young salvation in the name and spirit of Jesus. I record with tender sensibility the many ways they adopted to sweeten our labours; the prayers they presented to the throne of grace for our success, and the tears they shed on our parting. I bless God for the liberality of many who were not of our Society, especially in Magherafelt and Garvagh, and the facilities they afforded for procuring funds for our Missions; and the kindness I often received from my respected neighbours in Ballymena, during my sojournment among them; whose names, if not mentioned, are dear to my heart. May we live on earth as fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, till we join the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven!

CHAPTER XXIII.

1827-28-29.

IN 1827, the Conference was for the first time held in Belfast. There were present eighty-six preachers, and many other public characters, who were most cordially received, and amply provided for, by our kind and intelligent friends in that town and its vicinity.

The Rev. Messrs. Watson, Bunting, Mason, and Roberts came over from England, and greatly assisted us by

their counsels and ministry. The former was our President. The preaching and Christian intercourse of so many excellent men were much valued. The general Missionary meeting, and the reception of our young preachers into full connexion, made a deep impression on the public mind—Mr. Bunting's prayer on the latter occasion, was attended with a most extraordinary unction of the Holy Spirit.

The general movement at this time towards Reformation from Popery, induced the following reference to the early effects of Methodism in Ireland, when addressing the British Conference:—"We look back to the period when some of us and our fathers were suffered to labour almost alone in the great work of our common Lord; and we remember when, and where, small remnants of Protestant churches were preserved by the signal blessing of Almighty God on the labours of our ministers, from the overwhelming influence of a deadly superstition." And it might be added, when many were truly converted from that superstition, to become some of the brightest ornaments of the religion of Jesus.

While the preachers continued in Belfast, I went with my old friend, Mr. Ousley, to Smithfield, where he preached on the subject of confession, from Psalm xxxii. 5., to a great crowd of attentive hearers: but while he inveighed against "auricular confession," he provoked bitter hostility. Two men contradicted and blasphemed, and were violently proceeding to do mischief, when the police most seasonably interfered, and took them into custody.

My appointment this year gave me great concern. For weighty considerations I deemed it advisable to engage once more in the regular work, and was accordingly set down for the Lisburn circuit, with Mr. R. Beauchamp for my colleague. Our late Mission was divided—Bally-

mena becoming a centre for two preachers, and Maghera-felt for two more.

Having arrived in Lisburn, with my numerous family, we were crowded into the small preacher's lodging, at Belfast gate, until, in the course of a few months, I procured a more commodious house for ourselves and successors, in Gregg-street.

To a pious and inquiring mind, it affords much gratification to trace religion from its small and feeble commencement in many places, and then observe its spreading influence and utility, like the mystic waters flowing from the sanctuary, deepening and widening as it conducts one generation after another to the eternal world. The Lisburn circuit presents a profitable subject for such an inquiry respecting Methodism, and previous to any account of my own ministry when there, I shall stop to glean a few interesting particulars of its early history.

Methodism was introduced into Lisburn about the middle of the last century ; first among the poor : it then gradually progressed, until its saving principles were implanted in the hearts of a few of the wealthy inhabitants, whose names and characters have spread a sweet savour of the religion of Jesus over that town and country.

From the first attempts to establish preaching in Lisburn, its inhabitants have been distinguished for their candid and amiable treatment of the preachers. That description of the community, which in other places have so frequently been made the instruments of persecution, have here, most singularly, been disposed rather to fight in defence of religion, and its ministers. Perhaps the following circumstance may account for their favourable interference :—

When Mr. Wesley first visited Lisburn, in July, 1756, he preached in the Market-house. In his journal, he remarks, “ One man only gainsayed ; but the bystanders used him so roughly, that he was glad to hold his peace.”

The next day, the Rector, with his Curate, called upon Mr. Wesley, candidly proposed their objections, and spent about two hours in free friendly conversation. "How much evil," concludes he, "might be prevented, or removed, would other clergymen follow their example."

Nearly about the same time, when a person who had grievously persecuted the apostolic Walsh, in Newtownards, had followed him to this town for the same purpose, and was endeavouring from the window of the head-inn to stir up the people to violence, he was suddenly intimidated by old James Dickey, who drew his large butcher's knife in defence of Mr. Walsh; and when he observed his persecutor leaving town, raised a party, and gave him a most ungracious farewell.

I had the above account from Mr. Black, at that time supposed to be the oldest Methodist in Ireland. He joined the Lisburn Society in 1766, when there were but fourteen members in it, mostly old women. One of them, Mrs. Cumberland, received the preachers. There were then but six Societies in the County Down. Dr. Whitehead was among their first preachers.

At that time they assembled for worship in William Black's room; his stocking frames being in the front, and a little pulpit in the rear. They held prayer-meetings every evening, with only one man to sustain a public praying character; nor was there another within many miles. Shortly after, Frank Cumberland, brother-in-law to Mr. Black, came from England in a blessed zealous spirit, informed him of the surprising manner in which the work of God was carried on where he had been, by means of prayer-meetings, and encouraged him to commence in a similar manner, which he accordingly did, in a place called Longstone-lane. Here, the Lord was powerfully present; at their first meeting, a few men were convinced of sin, obtained mercy, and, in due time, became useful

public characters. Their early preaching, at five o'clock, was much blessed. From this period they continued to prosper. The powerful preaching of John Smith, that "son of thunder," was mightily owned of God, through Ballinderry, Magheragall, &c.

In April, 1762, they were again visited by Mr. Wesley. In the morning congregation, he observed, "Many appeared to be deeply wounded. Oh, may none heal their wounds slightly! By far the largest congregation met in the evening; and yet I saw not a scoffer, no, nor a trifler among them."

In 1770, they raised a small chapel, principally through the assistance of the celebrated Mrs. Gayer. In 1775, Lisburn became the head of a circuit, and has never since lost its privilege. It was in this year that Mr. Wesley had the fever, which he so affectingly describes as preventing him from preaching in Lisburn, and confined him in Mr. Gayer's, Derriaghy. Again, in 1778, he remarks, "I went to my old lodging, one of the pleasantest spots in the kingdom; and I could relish it *now*. Tuesday, 16th June, I preached to a lively congregation under the venerable yew tree, supposed to have flourished in the reign of King James the First, if not of Queen Elizabeth." The next day at their love-feast—"We were," he says, "greatly comforted; many of the country people declaring with great simplicity, and yet with great propriety both of sentiment and expression, what God had done for their souls."

In 1785, he preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house, and remarked, "He was now with the liveliest Society he had seen for many days, owing chiefly to the good providence of God, in bringing sister Johnson hither." Again, 1787, he remarks his having preached in Lisburn to a more numerous congregation than in Belfast—the largest he had seen since he left England; and all, except-

ing a few giddy children, behaved as men that heard for life.

They had now four preachers, who must have traversed a most enormous extent of country. Their chapel having become too small, they thought of re-building it; but, first, a few of the Society agreed to lay their case before the Lord by earnest prayer; that as he knew their circumstances, he would direct to such means as would enable them to build a suitable house for his name, and such as would accommodate their increased congregation. A very few days after this appeal to heaven, the heart of Mr. Johnson was stirred up to assist them. He subscribed £150, and engaged heartily in the work until it was perfected. In 1789, during Mr. Wesley's last visit to Ireland, he preached here, and observed that it was the largest and best finished of any in the North of Ireland. On the Sabbath evening, it could not hold the congregation; and the rain preventing him from preaching in the street, they gladly retreated, he remarks, to the Linen Hall. "Here was such a congregation as I have not seen since I came to the kingdom. But some things, *like gentlemen*, were walking to and fro, and talking during the greatest part of the sermon. If they had been poor men, probably they would have common sense! The meeting of the Society which followed was exceedingly solemn. The power of God fell upon many. I observed one gentleman, in particular, that wept and trembled exceedingly. I did not wonder, therefore, that the room was filled, and that we had a parting blessing."

Thus far I have referred to the early record of Methodism in this respectable town and neighbourhood. A long list of worthies could easily be adduced, who adorned their Christian profession, as burning and shining lights in their day; but time would fail to particularize their respective excellencies. For several years the preaching

has been removed from Derriaghy and Lambeg houses, and their inhabitants changed, yet the names of Gayer, Wolfenden, and Johnson, and Smith, and Barasley, &c., are associated with whatever is lovely and of good report in the profession and practice of pure and undefiled religion in that department of the church of Christ; nor are there wanting at present a few estimable characters, to maintain and perpetuate the same principles and influence to succeeding generations.

Many years since, a small branch of what is called the New Connexion, separated from their brethren, and built a chapel in Lisburn. At first, this secession produced unhappy feeling, but at present both parties are endeavouring to cultivate "another spirit," and frequently embrace opportunities of mutual fellowship in Gospel ordinances. In my time, there was a general respect for religion pervading the community. A large congregation attended the church. The popular preaching of Mr. Morgan had roused the Presbyterians to a concern for their spiritual interests; and the Society of Friends had a few respectable and influential members. Our Society, therefore, had a most favourable opportunity of letting its light shine, and of glorifying the grace of God amidst the churches.

Dromore was the second place on the circuit in point of importance. The leaders were affectionate, intelligent, and zealous;—spreading around the town and country that salvation which they enjoyed. We were blessed with unity, grace and peace. This was the general feeling over the circuit. We had received an unfavourable account of its spiritual state, but through the reviving influence of the Holy Spirit, our labours were blessed, the word of the Lord was glorified, and his work extended. My colleague engaged heartily, and persevered faithfully in his important duties. In attending the district-meeting

in Coleraine, we had a season of refreshment. My friend, Mr. Reilly, was Chairman, and my son Secretary. The glow of brotherly love, the pleasing prospect of increasing prosperity on the district, and the holy excitement produced by the public meetings, greatly comforted my soul, and strengthened me for subsequent labours.

Our circuit was an ample field, which invited and afforded many facilities for spiritual culture—the whole face of the country, surrounded with Societies and preaching places, and beautified by nature and cultivation, presented much pleasing variety to the eye and heart of a Christian minister, on which we cannot here expatiate.

In a domestic way, it was to me a year of keen suffering. My dear wife was the subject of frequent and extraordinary affliction; several of my children were also ill. But all was needful, and all was mingled with tender mercy. I could say, through the whole, with Philip Melancthon, “If I had no anxieties, I should lose a powerful incentive to prayer; but when the cares of life impel to devotion, which is *the best means of consolation*, a religious mind cannot do without them. Thus trouble compels me to pray, and prayer drives away trouble.”

In the midst of these domestic afflictions, it pleased our most compassionate God to grant a season of extraordinary grace to my family, collectively, which I shall briefly mention. It was like the re-appearance of the sun, after being darkened by a planet shower, bringing cheering and refreshing influence.

The Christmas of 1827, was the only festival that all my children had hitherto the opportunity of enjoying together. They had previously agreed to embrace that time, for evincing, in some peculiar manner, their filial regard for their parents. After the public services of the day, which were much owned of God, they assembled in the evening to accomplish what they had proposed. Their

mother, myself, and some other members of the family, were requested to wait for them in the parlour, which we did, not knowing what it was that engaged their attention, until they all entered in a most interesting manner. My eldest daughter then presented her mother with a beautiful work-box, and attempted to say a few words, expressive of their love and esteem for such a parent ; but weeping sensibility overpowered utterance. Her eldest brother attempted to relieve her by taking up the subject, but no attempt to restrain his feelings would avail ; his manly heart was overpowered by sympathy ; he also burst into tears, and weeping became general. It was not till after a considerable time, he was sufficiently composed to perform the task which devolved on himself ;—to present to me a valuable copy of Bagster's comprehensive Bible, and read the address with which it was accompanied. The effect produced on every one present, by the transactions of this night, baffles description. I never saw any thing like it. The present world is not often favoured with such scenes : it is not possible, where death and distance so frequently intervene.

The following is a copy of my children's address :—

“ To the Reverend Matthew Lanktree, our dear and honoured father.

“ We, your affectionate children, present you with this copy of the Holy Bible, as a small but grateful memento of our filial regard. Indelibly impressed upon our hearts, is the tender solicitude for our temporal and spiritual interests with which you have cherished and watched over us. ‘ Your love to us has been wonderful.’ Next to God we venerate and honour you. We feel incompetent to the effort of expressing the warmth of our gratitude. ‘ While life, and thought, and being last,’ our

praises shall ascend to heaven, that we have been blessed with such a father.

“ You have been a man of *One Book*—that Book we present to you. He who inspired its sacred pages, ‘hath counted you worthy;—putting you into the ministry.’ For *thirty-four years* you have, in various parts of the land, faithfully and ably preached a crucified Jesus; and many ‘glorify God in you,’ as the favoured instrument to them of immortal good. The Gospel you have preached, has been to yourself a source of unspeakable peace and joy. We have witnessed the holy fortitude with which it has inspired you in the midst of trials of no ordinary character; and have contemplated, with profit and delight, the bright example which your life has exhibited of the virtues of Christianity.

“ May he whom you have served, spare you for many years to watch over us! And when at last you are called to enter upon your reward, may you see your children’s children following you to glory! This we know is the highest wish of your heart; and we can assure you, dearest father, it is our sincere determination to serve the God of our father ‘with a perfect heart and with a willing mind’—to take your people for our people, and your God for our God.”

To this their twelve names were affixed.

During the year we had awakening calls to live for eternity, and work while the day is, by the removal of many of our valued friends to a better world. The commencement of my ministry in Lisburn, was to preach a funeral sermon, on the occasion of Mrs. Dickey’s death. She was a devoted, afflicted, steady Christian. One of her last sayings was, “none but Christ.” Mrs. Delacherois, Mrs. M’Dade, John Blackburn, Isaac Hodgins, and many others, were happy witnesses of God’s salvation with their latest breath.

The routine of our ministerial duties was diversified by a frequent interchange of visits with our neighbouring preachers, especially Mr. Reilly and my son from Belfast, which were as profitable, as they were delightful. We were blessed with frequent tokens of the divine presence and approbation in different parts of the circuit, particularly at the Lord's table ; and, towards the close of our year, had a considerable accession of members, besides the addition of an able preacher, in consequence of Mr. Lupton, (who had been sent to this country by the Primitive Methodists, as a Missionary,) and his friends being united to our connexion.

The district committee assembled in May, and was distinguished for affection and fidelity. The hospitality, and talented addresses, of the Belfast Stewards, added much to our comfort. The spiritual and temporal affairs of the district were in a state of growing prosperity, and our future prospects encouraging.

On the first of July, the Conference commenced in Dublin ; the Rev. John Stephens, our President. After a few days he became so seriously ill, that the chair had to be occupied by his companion from England, the Rev. John James, who sustained the office with great acceptance. Much was accomplished for the general good at this Conference. The characters of the preachers were closely scrutinized ; and what was intimately connected with their moral probity, the state of every circuit in Ireland was particularly examined. This was found necessary, from the distressing falling off on several circuits, both of our members, and resources, during the past year.

It appeared with sufficient evidence, arising from this examination, that although in some parts much evil has been done, and good prevented, by those who had separated from us, and from other unfavourable circumstances, yet, generally speaking, where the work declined, there

was a defect in zeal :—there was not that ardent, extra-exertion, “in season and out of season,” which the great Head of the Church had so graciously owned, for reviving and establishing his work among us in other places.

To accomplish the great design of our ministry, on the extensive scale to which as a body we are providentially called, every thing depends on our faithfulness to the Lord Christ. Great talents, require great grace to seal their application, and save those to whom they are entrusted ; while men of moderate talents, when truly devoted to the Lord’s work, in his own Spirit, scarcely ever fail to bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of God. But how any preacher that has buried his Lord’s talent, out-lived his usefulness, or his fitness to do the work of an evangelist, and sees the reverse of prosperity wherever he is appointed to labour, can still drag on, and not voluntarily quit the charge he cannot maintain, is a question of tremendous import !

The prosperous state of Methodism in Cork, Bandon, Skibbereen, Belfast, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, and a few other places, was under existing circumstances in our connexion, peculiarly delightful.

The subject which had for so many years engaged the attention of the Irish Conference, was fully discussed this year, and finally determined—how we should, as a Christian Society, discharge our national debt, now amounting to above *eight thousand pounds* ! Prompted by the liberal proposal of a few excellent friends, to assist to the utmost of their power, it was resolved that every preacher should subscribe, at least ten pounds, for that purpose ; that we should avail ourselves of the generous offer held out, and follow it up by a general application to all our Societies, that by one simultaneous effort we might roll off the burden that had nearly crushed us to ruin ; and afterwards, by the blessing of Providence, preserve our freedom.

I was re-appointed to Lisburn, with Mr. Lupton for my colleague. He did not disappoint my expectations, but approved himself a man of piety and zeal. He loved study, and preached well. We had now to attend to the spiritual interests of above 600 souls, and we endeavoured also to enlarge our borders. In Dromara, Miltown, and the vicinity of Dromore, we had new classes formed.—There were no less than sixty-six classes on the circuit. Much was to be done to draw forth the necessary pecuniary resources for our regular demands, besides extra supplies for other purposes; and, above all, the great effort to remove the general debt. The plans we adopted, and which, through the blessing of God, succeeded, I shall mention.

The invariable rule of my colleague and myself, was, to meet regularly, and bring all our affairs to the throne of heavenly grace. We then took counsel—fixed our appointments, &c. To impress our people with the importance of conscientious attention to the support of the Gospel, I prepared an address to our Societies, explaining the necessity of what was required from them, and its manner of appropriation. To this address was appended a few rules, which were unanimously adopted at the leaders' meetings. These were signed by the preachers and stewards, printed, and dispersed among our people. This procedure had a happy effect. It relieved the preachers and leaders from a constant repetition of the same things. The Scriptural claims which were thus plainly brought before a pious people stimulated them to liberality, and much was consequently done with promptitude and Christian feeling. Thus, through the good hand of our God upon us, we had a regular increase of grace and members, with a sufficiency of funds to meet all the demands of the circuit. Our people also cheerfully contributed to the general debt £53 7s. 6d.

While we were thus encouraged by knowing that our labours were not in vain, the concerns of my numerous family became burdensome and critical in the extreme. How to manage between the constant claims of my children, who were yet unprovided for, and dependent on their parents, and those of my ministry—between the urgent calls of public and private interests, was difficult to decide. Never did I so much need the direction of divine wisdom, and the succours of all-sufficient grace. The hopes, the fears, the deep concerns of my heart, were inexpressible. I often thought of Job, and Jacob, and David, whose large families, and parental solitudes, furnish such touching portions of the sacred history. Through the whole, blessed be God, the hope of brighter days on earth, and of an inheritance in heaven, sustained my soul ; and for many months, through varied and successive conflicts, cares and tribulations, “Perplexed, but not in despair,” became the most befitting motto for my experience.

Being chairman of the district this year, I was much drawn out in prayer, that the Lord would graciously pre-
side among us ; so that our weighty affairs might be conducted in the true spirit of our ministry, and in a manner worthy of our high calling. The annual meeting commenced in Belfast, Wednesday, the 6th of May. It was attended by twenty-one preachers, besides many of our circuit stewards, on the first day. Much business was to be transacted, and we sat early and late until Friday at noon. We had great peace and prosperity, excepting two circuits which had been closely pruned by discipline. On the others, we had a considerable increase. The district subscribed, towards the fund for discharging the debt of the Connexion, between preachers and people, above eleven hundred pounds.

In the examination of characters there was much open.

ness. Each preacher being requested to give a "reason of the hope that was in him," led to such a communication of living, experimental religion, as greatly comforted and delighted my heart, and proved a general blessing to the brethren. I scarcely remember so happy a district-meeting.

At the various Missionary meetings that I was called on to attend in Donaghadee, Comber, Dromore, &c., where I met the deputation from England, Messrs. Burdsal and Alder, my spirit was greatly revived, and, in private, I felt the Lord much with me; yet, with every comfort, there appeared to be given a premonitory intimation that troubles and afflictions were at hand. One day, in particular, when looking into Brown's Self-interpreting Bible, on 1 Kings, 17th chapter, the remarks were applied to my mind, as if they had been written solely for myself, and I immediately transcribed them. How appropriate my heart knows, and from what follows the reader may know in part:—

"They who dare be bold for God," says Mr. Brown, "May trust him for their protection; he will take care they shall not starve. He can make the most ravenous or the most destitute creatures provide for them. When one created source runs dry, he can make another to break forth. And plentifully he rewards those who cheerfully supply the wants of his servants. *Yet to what straits and perplexity may those who fear his name, or their children be reduced, before he appears for their relief!* But in our deepest distresses, God is nearer to relieve us than we think, and faith must silence all objections. A promise of God is better than a thousand arguments. He often exercises his people with the heaviest trials, *after they have met with remarkable favours*; and the more unexpected the stroke, the harder to be composed under it at first. In our troubles, how apt are we to quarrel

with our best friends, and, in our haste, to speak unadvisedly with our lips; but it were more decent and becoming humbly to search out, confess, and acknowledge our sin which is the cause of them."

Immediately after the district-meeting, I was seized with fever, and brought very low. For several days my recovery was doubtful. Eternal realities appeared in view, but blessed be the Lord, his peace overflowed my heart, and all distressing anxieties were banished. Dr. Thomson of Lisburn, was kind and constant in attendance, and I was visited by Dr. M'Donnell from Belfast; but my dear friend, Dr. John Aicken, came several times to see me, walking each time, engaged with the Lord for a blessing on his own soul, and on his prescriptions. My respected friend Mrs. Barnsley, and Daniel M'Enally, were my constant comforters.

As soon as I was able to bear it, I was informed of the illness of my eldest son, who was confined in his father-in-law's, near Bushmills. This stroke fell heavily on my heart, for it was attended with a train of aggravating circumstances. In attempting to write to him, I brought on a relapse of my disorder, and was nearly deprived of the power of my limbs.

When I gathered a little strength, I went to see my suffering son. His limbs were contracted, and his body emaciated, but there was no complaint in his lips, and his intellectual powers appeared in full vigour. My attention to his affairs, besides distance and difficulty, prevented my going to the Conference, which was held in Cork, and where, circumstanced as I now was, it was indispensibly necessary, for their proper information, that I should make my own statements. But this was impossible; and I had to wait, with more than ordinary suspense and anxiety for its decisions, with respect to my future appointment, and other weighty concerns.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

1829-30-31-32-33-34.

My station was fixed this year for Carrickfergus and Larne, where my son, if able, had been invited to labour. But here I soon found there was a most extraordinary "crook in my lot," which entirely incapacitated me from bringing my family to the circuit. Mr. Rutledge was appointed superintendent, and had a house provided for him by Mr. Mackay, his predecessor. Mr. M'Affee was already settled in Carrick with his family; so that, in point of fact, there was no place nor provision for my family on the circuit.

Mr. Jamison Shepherd had been employed as a supply for another preacher about Larne, during the last year, with a small provision for his wife. Through the influence of a friend, it was agreed that he should continue and labour on as usual, supplying generally my week day places, which, with my assistance on the Sabbaths, would provide for all the chapels on the circuit, and thus turn my awkward situation to answer a public good. To this I the more readily agreed, having been obliged before my appointment to take a house in Belfast, for part of my numerous family. Several of them had got situations there, and were living together; but they greatly needed the superintendence of their mother. Here then, I disposed of my whole family, and endeavoured to await the openings of Providence for their removal, which did not take place for a year and a half from that time. For the more I inquired and strove to effect it, the difficulty increased. While, therefore, "the cloud rested on us," we remained in Belfast.

We were ten in family.—How we lived is only known to

him "who seeth in secret." For several months the circuit afforded no supplies, and we were distressed by applications of different descriptions, which could not then be realized. In winter, my dear wife became dangerously ill, and were it not for divine support, her mind must altogether have lost its balance. On these occasions, I resolved to meet every event with firmness, and encouraged my family to keep "looking unto Jesus." We were much drawn together by sympathy; and at family worship, the frequent application of the word of life to our circumstances and hearts, was most remarkable; and, Oh! how seasonable in the trying hour was the peaceful answer of prayer! On this occasion, the tender sympathy of a few friends can never be forgotten. Their heavenly counsels, their "angel visits," and happy interference, descended upon our hearts "as the dew of Hermon."

The exercise of my ministry, with all the disadvantages of my non-residence, was a more than ordinary blessing. "It was good for me to draw near to God;" to bring all my burdens, griefs and fears, before him, when preparing for, and engaged in my Sabbath duties, had a blessed influence on my own heart, and frequently on my audience. In Carrickfergus I was generally blessed among the people, and found the conversation and sympathy of my colleagues, consolatory and strengthening to my heart. In Larne, the hospitality of good Mr. Boyd and family, and the increasing prospect of the success of the Gospel in the convenient and beautiful chapel, were equally agreeable and delightful. In Islandmagee, too, after the opening of the new chapel, the general appearance of good, and the happy meetings we had together, well rewarded the toil of travelling, which to me was frequently very difficult.

(Ballyclare chapel was beautiful and commodious, but

disproportionably large for the congregation. Still we had good Sabbath morning congregations, and generally good times.

I had a cordial welcome from Mr. Richard Bell, to make his house my home when in this town ; a kindness of which I availed myself with increasing satisfaction during the year. Mrs. Bell, was Miss Langtry, of Belvue, near Richhill. She attended our ministry ; and he was a conscientious member of the Society of Friends. To their children they allowed Christian liberty. They had ten of these, as "olive plants around their table," well ordered, and well instructed. The harmony, love, and respect which reigned among them—their attention to the Scriptures, to their Sabbath-school, and to business, in its proper place, I much admired. Such a sight is among the loveliest on this side heaven.

Our quarterly love-feasts and sacraments were seasons of great refreshment ; but the most abundant consolation that I experienced during the year, was on a journey from Larne, in lonely meditation, and pouring out my full heart before God in prayer. Viewing all the circumstances of my trying case, I saw that vain was the help of man ; and with many tears, was assisted to cast all my care upon Him who had hitherto cared for me. Trouble and anxiety fled away, and I returned to my distressed family, rejoicing in hope of present and eternal salvation.

On the 5th and 6th of May, we held our district meeting in Belfast. Our public concerns, generally, were in a prosperous state. We had a searching time respecting character. My affairs underwent a thorough investigation. It was a time of deep exercise of mind ; but when all was over, my soul felt as if lightened of an oppressive load. I could joyfully say, "the Lord is my portion." I looked forward with confidence to the approaching

Conference, and with delightful hope, to the final day of decision, when we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

After this meeting, I visited all the Larne end of the circuit; preached every where, and had much and pleasant conversation with Mr. Shepherd, whose Christian spirit and manner, the more I knew him, I the more admired. How has he laboured and travelled through the whole year, and not fainted! and how admirably has his good wife comforted and supported him in the Lord's work!

This trying season was now drawing near its close. Our general leader's meeting, our Missionary meetings, and final opportunities increased in interest. The clouds began to disperse, and the shadows to flee away. I observed with some, where it was not expected, a manifest increase of kindly feeling. Indeed the whole year appeared to me to afford a most indubitable test of true friendship, or the very reverse. They who acted the Christ-like part, cannot forget their feelings and motives; and the "Lord is not unrighteous to forget their labour of love." They who added affliction to the afflicted need not be envied.

After my paying my third visit to my afflicted son, I prepared for my journey to the Dublin Conference. Mr. Rutledge was my companion. The scenery was, in general, most agreeable and cheering to my mind, until we passed Ravensdale; then, with few exceptions, all wore the aspect of neglect, until we arrived in Dublin. When we were passing by the spot, near the Man-of-War, where I fell and was nearly killed, my mind was deeply impressed with the Lord's goodness in my preservation then and since, and in adding just "fifteen years to my life."

The solemn service of Abbey-street, July 4th, was much blessed to my soul. The first mention of King

William and Queen Adelaide, sounded strange ! Dr. Townly, our President, was the preacher. Though there was a noble congregation, and all was impressive, nothing affected me so much as the countenance of my old friend, Mr. Lewis, who happened to be standing near me. His head was white as snow, and he nearly blind. When the preacher gave out that verse,

“ Hear him, ye deaf, his praise, ye dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ,”

He sang with considerable animation ; but as he proceeded,

“ Ye *blind*, behold your Saviour come,” &c.

He was filled with extatic joy, and the tears gushed down his happy face in a torrent. May that saving name, which produced those hallowed feelings, sound from shore to shore, and be as the ointment poured forth on every believing heart and Christian congregation !

Our Conference was numerously attended. We had one hundred preachers present. The report made by our representatives of the liberality of our English brethren to assist us in removing our great burden, was truly affecting. They sent us help from France, and even from the Shetland Isles ! In our address to the English Conference, it is thus referred to. “ The late expression of brotherly love and liberality, communicated to us from every corner of our island, has added to our assurance that we, as the ministers of Christ, live in the hearts of our people ; but when we received the fruit of your ‘ work and labour of love,’ in your generous contributions to assist in removing our pecuniary burden, we cannot declare our gratitude. It was felt in our hearts, and is recorded in heaven.” At the same time, it was but too manifest, that to several brethren a most painful crisis had arrived in their private concerns, to which there had

been an advance for several years. The mighty effort to remove the debt of the Connexion, necessarily paralysed any generous and general effort, which might have been otherwise attempted, to meet the most distressing private cases of the suffering brethren; of consequence, little more could be done than to choose a committee to inquire, and report, respecting them, according to their circumstances.

The kind feeling of our President, and his companion, the Rev. John James, on those occasions, cannot be soon forgotten. In my case, perhaps, every thing was done that was practical. My hands were strengthened, and my soul revived and encouraged.

It was deemed expedient to commence a Mission in Bangor; to which isolated station, I was recommended. At any other period of my life it would not have appeared desirable, but at this time it suited the state of my mind. We had here but the remnant of a Society, and our chapel was but ill attended. It was November before we could procure a suitable habitation; and during the year, both myself and family were seriously afflicted. The unsettled state of several of my children, and the long protracted illness of my eldest son in Bushmills, made it a season of complicated trials and difficulties.

With regard to my labours. In the summer months I preached frequently in the open air, visited those to whom I had access in their own houses, and held meetings in the suburbs. In my attendance on the meetings held in the chapel, I strove to be faithful, and frequently, during my first year, was encouraged to hope, that by perseverance, we would have a steady and increasing congregation. I preached regularly in Groomsport, Crawfordsburn, Conlig, and occasionally in various other parts. In several places I adopted my usual catechetical plan of instruction, with pleasing prospects. In Whitespots, the seed fell into good ground, and brought forth

fruit to the glory of God. Here I formed a promising Society, of which my son John became the leader. It continues to do well, and two of its steady members have already joined the church triumphant.

It was in Bangor I formally joined the Temperance Society, and commenced using my endeavours to promote its interests in public and private. My reasons for so doing, were in conscientious accordance with the leading principles of my life, as a disciple of the Lord Jesus, and a minister of his Gospel. My narrative refers to early causes for my detestation of drunkenness; but the one-half would more than fill a volume, if what I have heard and seen through life were added. When deeply convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of all sin, and of my perishing need of salvation, I entirely abstained from ardent spirits, which proved a powerful preservative against my being again entangled by foolish company, and drawn back into the way to destruction. The rules of the Methodist Societies on the subject, were not irksome to my renewed nature; and I strictly kept them for conscience sake. But these did not appear to prohibit the *moderate use* of spirits diluted with water, sweetened and administered by the hand of a friend, or prepared by myself, when the requisites were elegantly furnished; more especially when weariness, indisposition, and “often infirmities,” seemed to require that gratifying restorative. Hence, I occasionally partook of the common beverage, but always *temperately*.

When a voice from America roused us from our slumbers in this country, to awake to righteousness, and turned the serious attention of professors and watchmen in Zion to a sense of our danger and duty, I was thankful to God, but apprehensive they had gone too far, and required too much to be successful:—that they were infringing on Christian liberty, and calling us to a measure of

self-denial, unwarranted by the precepts or example of our Lord. These were my first views of the subject ; but I soon found they were very inadequate. A deluge of intemperance had overspread the nation, and we could only stem the torrent by the most vigilant and determined perseverance in an opposite direction. I saw the tempting stimulant making such inroads on some, whose interests lay near my heart, as must have been ruinous if not speedily counteracted. Supposing, then, that the use of ardent spirits could not be proved unlawful, to me it must have been most inexpedient. I resolved, therefore, that in my family, the seducing liquid should not be tampered with, nor any encouragement to *touch, taste, or handle* it, be derived from my example. My determination on this subject, was strengthened from the weighty considerations which pressed on me as a minister of Jesus, whose example in all things, should be such as he could safely recommend to others, and serve as a living commentary, on his most ardent and pathetic addresses to the consciences of his hearers, on “mortifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts.”—Phil. iii. 17 ; iv. 9.

Many advantages have resulted, from the firm stand which I have, by the grace of God, thus maintained, and the frequent advocacy of the subject in which I have been engaged. My children have, almost without exception, followed my example ; and my own health, not to speak of higher enjoyments, is every way improved. I have heard, indeed, some curious, ingenious, and plausible objections and insinuations against total abstinence from ardent spirits, most of them from those “who are called to be saints ;” but I am reluctantly constrained to think, that *the love of strong drink*, however small the quantity, inducing a desire for its stimulating effects, is, after all, the grand objection. And I am persuaded, that there is not a professing Christian, or minister, of whatever rank

or standing in the church, that would not be wiser, holier, and happier—more healthy, useful, and exemplary—and better prepared for life or death, by a total abandonment of ardent spirits, than he can expect to attain while continuing the use of that most subtle, insinuating, and deleterious of all poisons.

At the return of the season, which required a particular review of another revolving year, I could not but feel astonished at the goodness of God in the preservation of myself and family. Various portentous calamities which, like mountain billows threatening overwhelming ruin, were turned aside or surmounted; and various matters of a favourable description, which appeared at first wholly impracticable, were effected by remote or unthought of agencies.

On the the 6th of July, 1831, our Conference opened in Belfast. The Rev. George Morley was our President, who was accompanied by the Rev. R. Newton and John James. Notwithstanding that there had been a good work during the year on several circuits, it was found that owing to emigration and other causes, we suffered a declension in numbers, which led to a most solemn and impressive discussion respecting our ministry. A few notes which I preserved, may tend to renew that important subject in the minds of the brethren concerned, and turn their attention to the minute which was printed on the occasion.

It was observed by one, how much all parties are now on the alert. “At an early period of our ministry we had to contend with ignorance, profaneness, and brutality; we have now to compete with the increase of piety, talent, and knowledge. Schoolmasters, and even children, could now judge, not only respecting our doctrines, but also our improvement in ministerial talent. We must, therefore, leave ‘first principles,’ and be able to preach ‘the whole counsel of God;’ to define and apply the whole

truth as it is in Jesus. Any man of common sense *may*, by diligence, attain to this; and *must*, if he be faithful to the cause in which he is engaged. 'In labours we must be more abundant.' The mere routine of duty must be exceeded, if we would enlarge our borders. There is abundance of proper Methodist soil yet uncultivated, which gentlemen will not visit! Much more might be done in the families where we visit and lodge—not by interfering in their family affairs, but seizing every opportunity of doing them good. Pastoral visitation, is an indispensable duty with a minister of Christ. We should respect our leaders' meetings, and let every case of discipline be brought through them. We should urge the local preachers and leaders forward, to diffuse around them the light and life of Christianity. Even our own appointments should be made out in the spirit of self-denial, and be perfectly disinterested. Let each find out in himself individually what may hinder the work of God, or grieve the Holy Spirit. Let us be humbled before the Lord for our unfruitfulness, that with renewed pardons, and under divine influence, we may go forth and prosper."

Another speaker commenced by highly commending the pastoral visits of other pious ministers to whom he referred, and inquired, "Do we thus diffuse the sweet savour of religion wherever we go? He had no doubt of the happy results, providing we gave ourselves to our proper work. We should faithfully follow backsliders, and attend the meeting of the classes." He further inquired, "Do we always speak *to and of each other* as we ought? I deprecate the ruinous effects upon our own children, should they hear preachers speak disrespectfully of each other. Here I may have erred—others may have erred—let us be humbled, and from this hour greatly respect each other, and conscientiously guard each others

character. Let the increase of our personal piety be manifest—let it be pre-eminent, and we must prosper.”

Another remarked, on the vast opportunity of good which was presented to us, by paying proper attention to children of own congregations. Here we shall have little opposition. He has met with numbers who were thus brought to God; besides, through this medium, we gain access to their parents. He considered that we have sustained much injury by the neglect of morning meetings, and pressed the great advantage of our coming from the throne of heavenly grace into the pulpit:—that much good was now doing by other ministers. “Let us profit by it;—let us leave others to speak of what we do, and go on abounding in every good work.”

A fourth preacher commenced by saying, with great emphasis, “*Our only business is to save souls.*” He placed two preachers, who were mentioned to him, in direct contrast. One seldom spoke of religion except when in the pulpit, or behind the chair, where he could preach well; then lay in bed in the mornings, and neglected visiting, &c. We know the result. Another prayed much, visited constantly, catechised the children, preached in the mornings, &c., and left on every circuit a lasting blessing behind.

He urged the vast importance of being attentive to our preaching places and appointments, and deprecated the practice of preachers always dining at home, and leaving no time to visit the people in country places. Several of these have been spoiled, or lost to us, by such conduct. Whether the leaders are faithful or not, the preachers should strictly inquire after the people. Thinks the very excitement of religious feeling among other parties will operate favourably to us, if we prove faithful. He greatly urged the advantage of private prayer, both for our own improvement and consolation. Preachers, above all men,

should discover a love to private devotion. We are much in public prayer, and should therefore be the more instant and earnest in private intercourse with God, that we may be sincere and consistent before Him ‘with whom we have to do;’—if that *link* be broken off, we are like a vessel loosed from her moorings, and driven before the winds of temptation. He concluded with the weighty sentence that commenced his speech, “We have nothing to do but to save souls.”

Mr. Newton was greatly gratified by the conversation which had taken place, and wished that all the preachers, not only in Ireland, but England, had been present. He considered the public taste was vitiated by illusive and bad reading, and recommended that we should use our influence to induce a better taste—thinks that even our manner of conducting some of our public institutions has not been favourable to spiritual religion.—“A Methodist preacher should be in every thing connected with Methodism”—that a spirit of scepticism is fearfully prevalent, it should therefore be opposed and overcome by our frequently holding forth the great evidences of our common Christianity—that we should adopt measures for the improvement of our minds for the work of the ministry. “Ours is a spiritual religion, we must therefore be spiritual. Ours is a holy religion, we must be holy. Ours is a heavenly religion, we must be a heavenly ministry. He feared we had lost much of our original character; that we have not that ardent zeal which distinguished our predecessors—they were “men of God, and flames of fire.” He mentioned, with great feeling, the character of Benson, as a preacher; at the close of whose sermons, his winding up was most extraordinary.

Mr. James said, that “we should not be discouraged. We should rely upon God for strength, and live for usefulness. He introduced the characters of Bramwell and

Stoner. They only lived to be useful, and hence they attained almost unparalleled usefulness. To this we should direct all our studies. Thinks we are not behind any body of ministers. We must improve our natural abilities. Preaching on new subjects, he considered exceedingly useful to ourselves, as well as others. The freshness of their influence was always grateful," &c.

The following is the minute which followed these important observations :—

Q. What can be done to promote the work of God in our Societies ?

A. " The Conference, after a full conversation on this interesting subject, and deeply impressed with the solemn feelings of that occasion, earnestly recommend that, as ministers, we should, in deep humility and unreserved devotion, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, dedicate ourselves to God and his work ; that we should attend more faithfully and laboriously than ever to the preaching of the word of life, meeting the classes in the country Societies, likewise the Societies in the cities and large towns, visiting our people from house to house, preaching more frequently in the mornings and in the open air, rendering our leaders' meetings more useful and spiritual, and diligently applying ourselves to the important work of catechising the children of our people, and promoting their spiritual improvement," &c. May these important and stirring recommendations never become a dead letter.

During this Conference, the ministry of our brethren, that of Mr. Newton in particular, was attended by vast crowds of hearers. On one occasion, it was calculated that 2000 persons had pressed into the chapel, Donegall-square, while Mr. Reilly addressed many hundreds outside.

I returned to the Bangor Mission, to which were attached Portaferry, and a few contiguous places. This

called for considerable labour and travelling, in addition to what had devolved on me the past year; yet it proved satisfactory, having afforded me the opportunity, once more, of ministering to some of my dear friends, and enjoying their Society, with whom, in former days, I had so many refreshing seasons.

In Portaferry, we had the advantage of a Mission school, the master of which, Mr. Kelly, was a man of fervent piety, and an acceptable local preacher. Here we had good congregations, happy times, and gracious prospects; also along the shores, and in sundry inland places, the word of the Lord was glorified. But while I felt increasing pleasure in attending to these openings, my opportunities of following up what had been commenced about Bangor, were proportionably diminished.

We commenced the new year, 1832, in Ballyeasbro'. I preached from Phil. i. 21; proposing that it should be our motto for the year; "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Blessed be God, it was the language of my heart!

About this time, I had the first opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Christian family of Summerhill, where I have been uniformly received with kind attention. Old Mrs. Keowen expressed much satisfaction at my visits. Her chamber was a consecrated place for calling on the name of the Lord. I found it "good to be there." Mrs. Keowen, though worn with years, had a good understanding. She was zealous for the church, and discovered a strong attachment to Methodism. I still found her devising liberal things—complaining of the littleness of her faith—diffident, timid, and prayerful—cleaving to Jesus, and waiting for his final salvation.

Hearing of the extreme illness of my suffering son, his mother and I hastened to see him: he was in as low a state as was consistent with existence; while, at times,

his intellectual powers appeared to rise above what might have been expected, even in his health. During this visit, I preached in Billy and Bushmills. I had also the opportunity of seeing Jane Toner, (formerly Craig,) on her death-bed. She rejoiced at seeing me on that solemn occasion, and our joy was mutual ; for she bore a triumphant testimony to the grace of God, and enjoyed a glorious hope of immortality. She informed me, that when she first came to hear the Methodists, she was but a child. Her mother being a Romanist, the Priest ordered her to turn Jane out of her house, which she accordingly did ; this drew her nearer to the Lord and his people. Shortly after my departure, she died in the Lord.

At November, I removed my family to Newtownards, with no other object in view than convenience to the work in which I was engaged, (for the house was in many respects ineligible,) but in a short time I found it a singular mercy, by its having brought me into neighbourhood with Mr. John Waugh, then the resident preacher. With this good brother I had previously but an ordinary acquaintance, which now advanced into a cordial intimacy and friendship, for which I most unfeignedly glorify God.

He also had a large family, and he witnessed with the heart of a Christian man, the extreme difficulties with which I had to contend ; and most promptly and effectually did he assist me to bear my burdens, so long as he continued in the place.

In the month of May, Dr. Clarke, who had been on a visit with Mr. Harpur, Donaghadee, preached for us in Newtownards, from Acts xiv. 22, " Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." It was a plain, useful discourse, and well adapted to the state of my mind and circumstances

This was the last time I saw and heard that eminent Christian preacher.

The Conference, 1832, was convened in Dublin. I travelled thither by the night mail, in company with my son-in-law, Mr. Wilson. Next day I attended, with a variety of feelings not easily described. The cholera had now visited our land. Its irresistible inroads were awfully felt, and reported from all quarters. The inhabitants of Dublin were filled with dismay; and we were scarcely there, when we heard of its ravages through the country I had left—Portaferry, Ballyhalbert, Donaghadee, Bangor, and Holywood. Deep solemnity filled the hearts of the preachers, and, in the fear of God, business was despatched with unwonted expedition. Blessed be the Lord, we were all preserved. During the past season, I could not but perceive a gradual declension in my natural strength, and although still willing to labour, apprehended that my time for taking a full share in the work of the ministry, was fast drawing to a close. I felt like one about to receive his *last* regular appointment. My private concerns, however, appeared to be under a gracious direction, which soothed and strengthened my heart; and my station was transferred from the Mission field to the Donaghadee circuit, which to me was a merciful allotment—a remove of my family being hereby prevented. I was to labour among those I greatly esteemed and loved; and my colleague, Mr. Samuel Harpur, was my old and tried friend and fellow-labourer.

Our President, the Rev. George Marsden, and his companions from England, Messrs. Theophilus Lessey, and John Beecham, greatly enlivened us by their counsels and fervency of spirit. The ministry of Mr. Lessey, strongly reminded me of what I had so often heard of the preaching of the venerable John Fletcher, from the same pulpit, in Whitefriar-street. The subject was John vi.

51. He seemed to be filled with God, and the unction of heavenly influence fell on the whole congregation. He felt for me as a brother, and took a lively interest in my private concerns.

Before the Conference concluded, we had another impressive conversation on the subject of faithfulness to our ministry, conducted chiefly by those who had borne the heat and burden of the day, sufficient to rouse "slumbering piety," and induce the most ardent zeal for God.

Never did I commence a year's labours under such remarkable circumstances. In Donaghadee, the cholera raged, and carried off some of our people. Pressed by the messenger of death, and unknowing who next might be summoned to the cholera house, or the grave, a general concern for eternal life pervaded the community. Our leaders and praying people, were at their post, and active for God. Whenever a preacher called to pray in a family, a congregation followed, and the chapel became greatly crowded. In this emergency, Mr. Harpur's illness, which hung so heavily on him the past year, returned, and wholly disqualified him from taking any part in the work. He was therefore necessitated to seek a supply in Mr. R. Hamilton, from the Carrickfergus circuit, who was an active young man; but still a weight of ministerial labour fell to my share, by far too much for my strength. The prosperous state of the work, however, bore up my spirit, and labour, weariness and weakness, were sanctified. Newtownards, the place of my residence, was greatly revived; and almost in every place we had encouragement. Two new classes were added to the Donaghadee Society, and in order to accommodate our increased congregations, we were obliged to add two new galleries to our chapel.*

In the latter end of November, I received a distressing

* See Appendix, F.

account of the illness of my youngest son, in Dungannon. Immediately I repaired thither, and found him extremely weak. The cholera was raging there also, but that was not the disorder by which he was affected; it had all the symptoms of speedy consumption. With difficulty I brought him home, and placed him under his mother's care, which was all his heart appeared to desire in the present world. We hoped he would have recovered, but the disorder proved treacherous. The state of his mind was marked by deep humiliation before God; by love to his Bible; by tender affection to all about him; by a placid, grateful spirit, pleased with every little attention, and especially by engaging in the delightful exercise of praise. He was greatly gratified by having me with him; which was, alas! very seldom, owing to the constant attention which the circuit demanded. After an absence of several days, I returned home on the 24th of December, when he appeared better. He met me with an embrace of filial tenderness, and shortly after read for me, very distinctly, a checqued letter from his brother Caleb. On the 25th, a memorable day with us, he sat up, and endeavoured to enjoy the conversation and comforts of the family circle. At night, however, he was much distressed with coughing, and breathed with difficulty. The next day he was unable to rise, and the difficulty of breathing continued. He discovered a tender happy spirit under his sufferings, and scarcely complained. In the evening, a little medicine was administered, to assist, if possible, to throw off the phlegm. At six o'clock, we were all about him, when he partook of some tea, and conversed a little: the doctor also came in, and sat beside him. The heavy breathing having ceased, his mother eagerly asked the doctor whether he had fainted, and instantly caught him in her arms; but he had ceased to breathe—our beloved child having departed this life without sigh or groan.

This was the first breach, made by death, in our family group. And, Oh! how tender the stroke—how tempered with mercy—how sweetly instructive to the survivors! This child had become most endearingly interesting to the whole family. His mind gave indications of superior capabilities; and, in his external appearance, he was tall, comely, and interesting.

When we dedicated him to our covenant God by baptism, I had the expectation of being the *first* sufferer in the sacramental cause. This circumstance, connected with the name of my colleague, induced me to call him GEORGE STEPHEN; and it was on St. Stephen's day, in his seventeenth year, that our dear George, the first of our twelve children, fell asleep on the bosom of mercy. When in the settled calm of death, his countenance became indescribably beautiful; "there was something so exalted, that the most inattentive might see it shine through the ruins of corruption."

The commencement of the new year, 1833, was distinguished by special mercies, and a plenitude of spiritual consolation, which was graciously dispensed, preparatory to renewed trials. On the 3d of February, our eldest son exchanged mortality for life. This was an event which we were prepared to meet, rather with gratitude than regret, considering his complicated and long continued sufferings; but it was not so soon expected, for only a few days prior, we had received a consolatory letter from him on the subject of his brother's death. Accompanied by his brother John, I attended his funeral, on which occasion, his brother-in-law, John Stethem Wilson, delivered a solemn address in Bushmills chapel, from whence his body was removed, most respectfully attended, to Billy church-yard, where his earthly remains must rest until the voice of Jesus calls us forth to meet him at his coming.

A character of my talented son I shall not attempt. A memoir of him is prepared by a fitter hand. It pleased our heavenly Father to favour us with the mournful gratification of having him at our own house for a few weeks in summer. He was then so far recovered as to pay us his last visit. At that time he had great hopes of recovery, and attempted to preach twice. Once in Newtownards chapel, where his appearance, his subject, and impressive manner, were deeply affecting. His next attempt was when he accompanied me in a jaunting-car to John M'Donald's, in Loughries, and requested me to allow him to address the people, which I did, rather reluctantly. Few men, I am persuaded, ever attempted to preach under such circumstances. But the ardour of his soul, constrained him to expound and apply Rev. xiv. 1, 5, in a manner becoming the heavenly subject; and I believe none who then saw him, ever expected to hear him again. It was my last time of enjoying that privilege. He lived a few months after he left us, redeeming every interval which pain and weakness allowed, for revising his MSS.; and finishing his treatise on the DIVINE GOVERNMENT. A spasmodic attack in his stomach, gave the final shock to his feeble frame. Finding his last moments had arrived, he spoke some affecting words to his wife, and the servant that had so long attended him, respecting the trouble he had so often given them, which was over for ever; bade them all farewell; then poured out his soul in prayer, and having breathed his last petition, "Now, Lord, receive the soul of thy servant in peace!" he expired.

His filial affection, and respect, are engraven on the hearts of his parents. His concern for the present and eternal interests of the descending branches of the family, should never be forgotten. Since his death, I have met several persons who have said he was the instrument by

whom they were brought to God. His last letter, dated January the first, I have reserved for this place. It will serve as a memorial of those feelings with which he entered the eternal world, and awaken responsive sentiments in every pious sympathetic heart.

“My respected, my dearest Parents,—When I got John's letter, on the 30th ult., I was unable to answer it. I had been seized some days before with spasms in my stomach, which were attended with intolerable pain and agony; and which sunk me to child-like weakness when I had heard of that solemn event. But it has pleased God, so far as I am concerned, to restore me from the extreme virulence of that attack, and I am now able to engage in that most trying, yet, thank God, to me unwonted exercise, of sympathizing with a father and mother, on the removal from their care and stewardship on earth, of a most beloved child. Mysterious, adorable power, past finding out are thy ways! The youngest has been taken, the eldest left. And yet, who could have imagined this, when that lovely youth carried in his affectionate arms, his weak, sorely afflicted elder brother, a few months ago. To me it was literally a shock.—In fact, it was nearly causing a double breach; for my poor frame, worn with a spasmodic attack for a week, was almost gone, and I had two women sitting up with me for three nights consecutively. But why so much of myself? Dearest father!—dearest mother!—there is hope—there is mercy. ‘I will sing of mercy and of judgment.’ The hand that smites you, is the hand of your reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. The Father that loves you—that, as a testimony of his love, has taken one of your own offspring to be a ministering spirit before his throne; to be eternally free from those corroding, annoying tribulations, by which your path in life has been so roughened.

And Jesus who hath loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood, sympathizes with you. And the church of Christ, for whose interests you have long and severely laboured, pours in its share of sympathy.

He is not dead, but sleepeth.' 'You shall return to him, but he shall not return to you.' While then you drop the tear of fond and tender affection over your beloved child, behold Mercy's hand pointing to brighter dispensations, and encouraging you 'to mourn, not as those who have no hope.'

"I can say no more—my heart is full—I cannot enlarge in this case. But this you must attribute to my head, not my heart—for the relation so near, so touching, so thrilling in its attaching interests, deprives me of utterance. Strive, my dear mother, and let not the excess of grief bear down your health and spirits, and make you forget other attachments and links you have left to bind you earthward for a season, till your Master's will is *fully* done. Farewell, dearest brother—farewell, but not for ever! I shall yet greet thee in nobler and better
§ climes! Dear parents, you share my sympathy and love, which, with Jane's, I hereby present to you, and all the family at home.

MATTHEW LANKTREE, Jun."

These were his last words. Blessed be God, for the consolation they conveyed after our double bereavement!

According to my ability, I filled up the remainder of this year, by attending to the various calls of duty, which I began to feel unusually, and almost invariably followed by extreme bodily languor, and frequent indispositions.

At the district-meeting, I was able to make my returns, respecting the state of the circuit, with much joyfulness of conscience. I also stated my willingness to labour on, and die in the harness, if such were the divine will; but

felt persuaded, that, for the present, both body and mind required rest. This statement being made to the Cork Conference, 1833, my brethren agreed with my views, and I was allowed to retire from the responsibilities of a circuit, and exercise my ministry according to my strength. Notwithstanding the previous views I entertained of the expediency of retirement, this change, in my relation to the church of Christ, was acutely felt. It was attended with concomitants of a most painful and distressing character, which I could neither foresee nor avert ; and from which I found it vain to seek immediate redress, except from the throne of grace. The particulars might create sympathy, but would not edify ; I therefore forbear : though cast down, I was not destroyed. “ Hope stands justly among the highest mercies of God.” Animated by the expectation of present and eternal deliverance from all I could feel or fear, I was encouraged to cast my care of every kind upon Him who had hitherto cared for me, and he most graciously and seasonably imparted consolation and strength to my wounded spirit.

Mr. Harpur was appointed the third year to the Donaghadee circuit, with Mr. Hill for his colleague ; an arrangement which greatly contributed to my comfort. A few efforts at our usual labour was more than sufficient for Mr. Harpur’s strength. The rupture of a blood vessel reduced him to extreme weakness, and threatened immediate dissolution. He lingered, however, for a few months, and I supplied his places, until the services of Mr. Shepherd were secured. Almost to the close of life, Mr. Harpur expected to recover. His loins were girded for his great remove, but he wanted brighter evidence of his meetness for the heavenly inheritance, which was afforded, to use his own expression, “ with as much clearness as the sunbeam which shone through his chamber window.” Adding, most emphatically and repeatedly, “ After all !—

after all !” The arrival of Captain William Harpur, his brother, to whom he was attached by almost unprecedented affection, roused him from a state of apparent insensibility for a short time ; when, after praising God for this additional mercy, the sight of his “beloved brother,” and bearing testimony to the glory which beamed upon his soul, he was strengthened to deliver an impressive dying charge to his children ; then calmly slept in Jesus, March 2, 1834.

Mr. Harpur was an amiable character. He had a mind formed for the kindest feelings of Christian friendship. He was a disinterested, zealous, and useful preacher. But our Lord was pleased to remove him from the labour which he loved, to endless rest—from tedious suffering, to everlasting consolation. He soon followed his friend, Dr. Clarke ; and was himself soon followed by his beloved daughter, Miss Harpur, to unite with the happy spirits before the throne, in ascribing glory to God and the Lamb for ever.

With regard to myself, though the usual variety of my itinerant life was vastly abridged, yet, blessed be God, I was not disqualified from the exercise of my ministry ; frequently in Newtownards, and occasionally elsewhere. The private demands for visiting, &c. were very numerous. These, with attention to the interests of my family, at home and abroad, and writing my Narrative, left no melancholy vacuum in my days or hours. Through the whole, my experience accorded with the observations of good Bishop Patrick—“ First, that our solid comfort doth not depend upon our doing every thing so readily, easily, and delightfully, as we would, but in accomplishing the will of God. And, secondly, that humility, patience, and submission to the will of God, in the midst of our infirmities, may be more acceptable to him, than that complacency and joy which we feel to arise merely from the sense that we have of our strength and abilities.”

The year 1833, which was now about to close, was rendered the more remarkable and monitory, by its being the **GRAND CLIMACTERICAL** of my life. It was deeply impressed on my mind by solemn and repeated warnings—by the deaths of friends and brethren; and by the reminiscences of former days, which occupied my mind so frequently at this period. To explain my thoughts and feelings, I shall borrow a few appropriate lines from Young—

“ As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
A panting traveller, some rising ground,
Some small ascent has gained, he turns him round,
And measures with his eye the various vales—
The fields, woods, meads, and rivers he has past;
And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home—
—— Thus I” —

Of my first period, or seventh year, I remember little more than the rumours and bustle respecting the American war, and my frequently writing three sevens in my copies. This was in 1777.

My next occurred in 1784, of which I have no pleasing recollection. I was beginning to look around me at the ways of men, and inquire after happiness, but found it not, being bewildered in sin and folly. In 1791, my twenty-first year, and third seventh, adored be the God of salvation, my state was widely different. I was “ saved by grace, through faith,” in the atonement and mediation of the Son of God. I was taken into his family, and endeavouring to invite others to a participation of the same mercy. My fourth seven was the memorable year 1798. I was then a travelling preacher, preserved amidst public and private calamities; “ kept alive with death so near,” under the shield of Almighty protection. My fifth, brought me to the meridian of life and strength, labouring on the Longford circuit. I had then a wife and four children. The path of duty was

rendered increasingly delightful by the presence and blessing of the Lord Jesus. This was in 1805. My sixth, placed me in Londonderry, 1812, tried as in a furnace! In my seventh, I was a Missionary in the Ards, 1819, with a family of ten children. We resembled a ship, heavily laden, and tossed with tempest; but the Master was with us, who kept us afloat, and favoured us with some precious gales. In Ballymena, 1826, I attained my eighth seven. We had then our twelve children; and witnessed, amidst "troubles in the flesh," the prosperity of God's work, and much of the conducting and protecting care of divine goodness. I am now arrived at my ninth seven, the GRAND ERA referred to; residing in Newtownards, with the faithful companion of my toils and cares; comforted with the filial attentions of a remnant of my numerous family, and endeavouring to devote my time and strength to the Lord my God, in the manner already intimated. With adoring gratitude, I acknowledge the divine economy by which we have been thus far conducted, and are now supplied with so many helps, to facilitate our progress to a glorious immortality.

Having thus closed the account of my thirty-nine years' itinerancy, and arrived at the end of the sixty-third year of my life, I conclude my Narrative, by commending it to the divine benediction. With such impressions, it becomes me to say with the sweet singer of Israel, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."



APPENDIX.

31

NOTE A, PAGE 41.

THE Rev. Henry Moore, who travelled this Circuit in the year 1779. gives an interesting account of the Society in the town of Coleraine at that time. At the commencement of Methodism there, the preachers had to go out to the street, and invite sinners to the Saviour. They were suffered to do this without molestation, and shortly formed a Society consisting chiefly of the poor. Shortly after, a large room in the deserted Barrack was fitted up, which was well filled with attentive hearers. Two young ladies, the Miss Youngs, becoming Methodists, added strength to the Society, and influenced, by their example, the genteel part of the community to attend the preaching. "Never," says Mr. Moore, "have I known a Society more dead to the world, more alive to God, or more attached to the whole of what is called Methodism. The meetings were very lively; the congregations increased; and every one seemed to say, with the Apostle, 'This one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'.....The two Miss Youngs were the principal members of the Society. They were in every respect exemplary—conforming in all things to our rules, respecting dress and every thing else. Mr. Wesley had noticed, and seemed much interested for them. His journal, written at that time, relates the following event: 'Sunday, June 7, 1778.—In the evening, I saw a pleasing sight.—A young gentlewoman had entered into the Society without the knowledge of her relations; she was informed this evening that her sister was speaking to me on the same account. As soon as we came into the room, she ran to her sister, fell upon her neck, wept over her, and could just say, 'O sister, sister!' before she fell on her knees to praise God. Her sister could hardly bear it; she was in tears too, and so were all in the room. Such are the first-fruits at Coleraine. May there be a suitable harvest!' The preacher who was present informed me that it was too much for Mr. Wesley. After look-

ing on for some moments, he ran into an adjoining apartment, and shut the door." See *Mr. Henry Moore's Brief Account of his Life and Experience*, page 357.

NOTE B, PAGE 102.

My son-in-law, the Rev. John Stethem Wilson, sent me the following testimonial to this excellent clergyman's life and death:—

"Dear Sir, I feel great pleasure in adverting to the character of the late venerated Rev. Andrew Mosse, Rector of Kilnemanagh, near Oulart, County Wexford; who, like his Master, went about doing good, visiting from house to house, preaching and teaching the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and sowing the good seed in the most sterile portions of his parish. His preaching was extempore; and his address plain, ardent, and affectionate. He frequently preached for an hour, and then, after continuing in the Sabbath-school two hours, would hasten home, the distance of two miles, to engage in his evening lecture; so that on the Lord's day he was in 'labours more abundant.'

"His doctrinal views were Calvinian, or Baxterian; but his heart expanded with Christian benevolence, and breathed good-will to all.

"The poor were the objects of his tenderest sympathy. Repeatedly has he been known to deny himself the comforts of life to administer to their wants; and to this day, his name is seldom mentioned by that class, even amongst the Romanists who knew him, without evident emotion.

"No physician living convenient, he supplied the place of one, in his attention to the sick, and his simple prescriptions were often attended with the happiest results. On this account also, 'when the Eye saw him it blessed him.'

"He was one of the first, if not the first, who introduced Sabbath-schools into that county. In 1812 and 13, I attended one of them, and it is a most delightful reflection, that out of nearly one hundred scholars, the whole, with few exceptions, became decidedly pious.

"Two young men, who were enlightened under his ministry, subsequently consecrated themselves to the Lord, and are now Wesleyan ministers.

"For several years he was the subject of severe bodily suffering, which terminated his useful life at Bedeforde, Devon, whither he went for change of air. For some weeks before his death, his pain was excruciating; but his God was with him, and in patience he pos-

sessed his soul. When spoken to respecting the state of his mind, in those trying moments, his constant reply was, 'Stayed on Jesus!' His pastoral charge lay near his heart, and with his last faltering breath he committed them to the 'good Shepherd.'

"He is gone, but lives in the affections of all who knew him. His great urbanity of manner—his parental affectionate admonitions—his unaffected, deep humility—his uniform deportment—his fervent zeal, even when pressed down by constant affliction—his serenity of temper—his entire devotedness to God, recur to my memory with affecting sensibility.

"I was but a lad at the above period. There were then few, if any, Methodists in that place, yet frequently have I heard him speak of them with respect. At present, some of his nearest relations are in our Connexion.

"He quit this mortal scene for eternity, the 26th of February, 1816, aged 41 years. May my latter end be like his!"

NOTE C, PAGE 197.

With the subsequent history of this extraordinary man, I am little acquainted. He wrote to me from Dublin, March 25, 1819, and observes, "I expect to embark for America in a few days; have had many sore trials and conflicts since we last parted, but out of them all, thus far, hath the Lord delivered me; and many precious souls has he given me for my hire, which, if I prove faithful to the end, will be stars in my crown of rejoicing in a future and better world..... Should we never meet again on these mortal shores, the bonds of the Gospel shall ensure a happy meeting in the skies, if we prove faithful to the LAMB. Adieu to poor Ireland!"

The following accounts of his death and character, were sent from America in private letters to friends in Dublin:

"Your much-loved Lorenzo is at rest. He died on the 7th of last month (February, 1834) in Georgetown, on his way to Washington, the seat of Congress, where he was going about some business. Feeling himself weak, he entered an apothecary's shop and asked for some medicine. The physician told him it could be of no use to him, for he would not be alive in six hours. 'Is that your opinion?' said Lorenzo. 'It is,' replied the doctor. 'Amen, so be it!' said Lorenzo, and in the course of one hour he expired."

From another correspondent:—"Tell James Rainsford that his eccentric acquaintance and friend, Lorenzo Dow, the well-known

itinerant preacher, died at Georgetown, near Washington, on the 7th of February, 1834. He was a native of Coventry, Connecticut. He had travelled extensively in Ireland and England; and there are few places in the United States which he did not visit. He was a preacher for more than thirty years, and a Methodist by profession; though he did not act in Connexion with them. Few preachers have held forth to a greater number of hearers, or have been more successful in winning souls to Christ.

NOTE D, PAGE 282.

MR. AVERELL'S departure from his former friends, and all his subsequent measures to divide and destroy our Connexion, will appear the more strange and difficult to be accounted for, *on Gospel principles*, when contrasted with the following circumstance:—The morning after the yote of 1816 had passed in favour of the ordinances, Mr. Averell came into the Conference, and standing up, while the tears ran down his cheeks, he looked round upon the preachers and said, "I cannot leave these men, for I know not where to find any like them!" The brethren were delighted; and Mr. Tobias, stretching his hand across the table, grasped that of Mr. Averell in the most cordial manner. Not long after this, Mr. Averell *left the men* to whom he professed such conscientious attachment, and placed himself at the head of those who had separated from us, where he still continues!

NOTE E, PAGE 293.

THE Copeland Isle is separated from Donaghadee, by a channel two miles in breadth; and maintains thirteen families. After the Scotch had settled in this country, it was inhabited by Presbyterians, who attended divine service regularly in Donaghadee; for which purpose they had a large boat in which they sailed together. It is reported, that frequently would their pious minister and his people watch them, whilst toiling to make the shore, against wind and tide, and delay the service until joined by these zealous islanders.

After that generation had passed away, the place was uncultivated for many years. When it again became inhabited, it was by a generation that "knew not the God of their fathers." Robert Emberson appeared an exception, and mourned over the wickedness which prevailed among his friends and neighbours. He would retire among the rocks to implore the Lord to have mercy upon them, and send a

minister to instruct them in the way of salvation. He who said of Saul of Tarsus, "Behold, he prayeth!" gave this supplicant a gracious intimation that his prayer was granted. Shortly after Mr. Hill had been appointed to the Ards Mission, he visited the Island, and preached to its inhabitants from Mark i. 15. Several of them believed his report. Robert received the preacher and his message as from God, became a partaker of pardoning grace, and a witness for the God of his salvation. A Society was soon formed, of which he became the leader. He received much of the mind of Christ, and was remarkably qualified to encourage others to follow his blessed Master. He was greatly beloved by the people; the Society prospered under his care, and the voice of praise and prayer became general in their habitations.

Not long after the commencement of this good work, the Lord was pleased to call his servant to witness for him under a painful and protracted liver complaint. His poor body was chastened with strong pain, and his soul frequently assailed by the powers of darkness; but he knew in whom he had believed; he called upon his sympathizing Saviour in the trying hour, and found his strength was made perfect in weakness. Shortly before his death, the enemy made his last and most severe attack. During this conflict his father was called from the field to plead with God in his behalf. On that trying occasion, while his aged parents bowed themselves together by the bed of their suffering child, his soul was filled with the peace and joy of faith. When his parents had taken their seat on the opposite side of the room, they observed his eyes as if steadfastly fixed upon some object; suddenly, for a moment, his countenance beamed forth as if a ray of glory had shone upon it, when, with a heavenly smile he broke silence, and said, "Father, I now know that my anchor is within the veil!" and shortly after expired.

NOTE F, PAGE 381.

THE Wesleyan Society in Donaghadee had only a feeble commencement; but after a few years of humble effort, the word of truth struck deep root into a few hearts, where, cherished by faith and prayer, and guarded by watchfulness, it brought forth the fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of God. Their first place of worship was a small barn belonging to Anthony Carey. Mary, his daughter, (now a mother in Israel) by her faithful and affectionate regard to what she believed was the cause of God, greatly promoted the interests of

the Society. After some time of patient continuance in well-doing, she was joined by Miss Smith; both of them being influenced by the same spirit, were enabled to extend a happy influence around them over the different grades of society.

Mr. Steele built their chapel; much to their advantage, but to the injury of his health. He saw the importance of the undertaking, persevered through every discouragement to have it accomplished, and by a mighty effort he succeeded. When I came to this country, in 1815, we could only give them preaching on a week day, once in the two weeks; their faithful friend, and ours, Mr. William M'Connell, preaching to them on the Sabbaths. By considerable extra exertion, we gave them Sabbath evenings; the advantage thus afforded was improved, and the Society and congregation were soon considerably increased. The subsequent culture of Mission ground in the neighbourhood, had a quickening influence, and tended still further to advance their interests, whilst they continued to increase in life and love.

After a few years, Mrs. Smith had a house built beside the chapel for a preacher's residence, at her own expense. Several of the respectable inhabitants became attached to the congregation and the Society; especially of the "honourable women," who, for intelligence, piety, and benevolence, have been ornaments to their Christian profession. Their Sabbath-school, Missionary Association, and Society funds, are on the increase; while the spiritual and gracious character of the Society, generally speaking, give satisfactory evidence that "Jesus is the author and finisher" of their faith. Since the increase referred to at the time of the cholera, they have had seasons of sifting and pruning; but they are, thanks be to God, in a healthy and happy state: they are united to each other in affection, and a blessing to their neighbours: they strengthen the hands of their pastors while labouring for their good, and will doubtless be to them a "crown of rejoicing" in the day of Christ.

FINIS.

